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ILLUSTRATIONS
OF THE
SCENERY OF KILLARNEY
AND THE
SURROUNDING COUNTRY,

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P R E F A C E.

ON adding one more to the numerous topographical works which are already before the public, some apology might be deemed necessary, were not the following pages descriptive of a part of the united kingdom, which, though confessedly interesting, has hitherto remained very imperfectly known. The Lake of Killarney, however, has not wholly escaped notice : in every general account of Ireland its extraordinary beauty has been dwelt on ; it has been the theme of the poet ; and has afforded subjects for a great variety of

engravings. But as language, unaided by the pencil, is insufficient to convey distinct ideas of visible objects ; so the productions of art, unaccompanied by a detailed verbal explanation, can communicate little knowledge of a place, beyond what may be collected from the mere glance of the eye ; and accurate even as the representations of particular views may be, they commonly leave the mind ignorant, both of the connection of the component parts, and their relative situation in respect to the surrounding scenery : some account of the Lake, in which the description was assisted by a series of plates, appeared to be much wanting, and it is humbly hoped that the work now offered to the public will be

found, in some measure, to supply this deficiency.

The two first divisions of the work are devoted entirely to the scenery of the Lake ; the remaining sections are generally descriptive of the surrounding country, including a considerable part of the southern coast of Ireland. The materials were chiefly collected in the year 1800 ; they were augmented, at different periods afterwards, during repeated visits to Killarney, where the author has occasionally remained for several months together. It was not, however, until very lately, that he came to a determination of arranging them for the public eye : the task was undertaken for the amusement of his leisure hours ; hours which, if not use-

fully employed, have, at least, glided agreeably away, while he was engaged in retracing those scenes which had formerly given him so much delight. That the work might have been rendered much more attractive by an abler pen, he feels very sensibly ; but, whatever its imperfections may be, he ventures to lay claim, at least, to the merit of fidelity.

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SECTION I.

THE Lake of Killarney is situated nearly in the centre of the maritime county of Kerry, on the confines of a chain of lofty mountains. The space included between this chain and the ocean, on the west, containing upwards of thirty square miles, is entirely occupied by other mountains of still greater magnitude,

amongst which are those called Magillicuddy's reeks, computed to be the most elevated in Ireland. In general, the disposition of these mountains is very irregular; but, as they approach the sea, they form short ridges, terminating on the coast in bold and rugged headlands.

This mountainous region abounds with lakes. They are mostly found in the depths of the valleys; but some are situated on the sides of the mountains, at a great elevation, in cavities resembling the craters of volcanos. The one known by the name of the Devil's Punch-bowl, near the summit of Manger-ton, in the vicinity of Killarney, is at least fifteen hundred feet above the level of the sea; and after heavy rains discharges a large stream, which rolls down the mountain in a succession of cataracts, distinguishable by their white foam at the distance of many miles.

Of these numerous lakes, the largest, as well as the lowest, is that of Killarney. It may be considered, indeed, an immense reservoir for the waters of the surrounding country, supplied by the overflowings of other lakes, by rills from the adjoining mountains, and by rivers which fall into it after having been augmented during their long course by countless tributary streams. The only outlet to this extensive basin is the clear and rapid river Laune, which con-

veys the surplus water into the Atlantic ocean through the bay of Dingle.

Nor is Killarney less pre-eminent above all the other lakes of Kerry, on account of beauty than extent : for whilst the shores of the latter bear no traces of cultivation, and are rarely distinguished by any striking features from the dreary wastes which surround them, its enchanting banks, singled out as it were by Nature for the display of some of her choicest productions, present the charming variety of a rich and adorned landscape, contrasted with the picturesque wildness of mountain and forest scenery.

The lake consists of three distinct bodies of water. Of these, the first, which is called the upper lake, lies embosomed amidst the mountains : the others, situated at the exterior base of the chain, are bounded at one side alone by mountains ; and in the opposite direction they open to a cultivated country, whose surface is diversified by innumerable hills. The two last divisions are nearly upon the same level, and lie contiguous to each other, being separated merely by a narrow peninsula, and some small islands, between which there are channels passable for boats ; but the upper lake stands three miles distant, at the head of a navigable river which flows through a romantic valley or defile. Near the termination of its course, this river divides into two

branches, one of which flows peaceably into the bay of Glena, on the great or lower lake ; the other, forcing its mazy way through a rocky channel, issues with considerable impetuosity into the middle lake, under the woods of Dinis island.

The first mountain in the chain we have described, beginning at the east, which meets the waters of Kilarney, is that of Turk. It forms the boundary of one entire side of the middle division of the lake ; from which circumstance the latter receives the name of Turk lake. Beyond this mountain there is a defile in the chain, through which flows the river from the upper lake.

The next mountain in succession is called Glena. It projects, as may be observed on the map, beyond the line of Turk, so as to present two sides to the water : one of them overhangs the bay of Glena ; the other opens to the broadest part of the lower lake. Both these mountains rise abruptly from the water, and are marked by numerous bold breaks and projecting rocks. They remain nearly in a state of nature ; no roads, no proprietary boundaries, are observable on their surface, and they exhibit few traces of cultivation.

Tomies mountain, the next and last in succession which is washed by the lake, rises more gradually than the others, and at its base presents to view a



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Rough Island

Dingle M^d



J. W. del.



Sketch of the River



Sketch of the River

considerable tract of fertile sloping ground, which is under cultivation.

Not long since all these mountains were clothed down to the water's edge with oaks of large growth ; most of these venerable trees, however, have fallen under the axe, which has been busily plied year after year. On that side of Glena next to the bay, a considerable extent of wood still indeed adorns the landscape ; but even this last surviving remnant of the vast mountain forests of Kerry has been doomed to perish ; the woodmen have already commenced their ravages ; and in a short period the landscape will be deprived of one of its richest ornaments. The destruction of these forests is principally attributable to the manufacture of iron,—a business once carried on with great spirit in various parts of the county, and for which an abundant supply of charcoal was required. As fuel became scarce, the iron-works declined, and at last they were totally abandoned. The woods are now cut for other purposes, as timber in this country is become extremely valuable, in consequence of the prodigal use that was formerly made of it.

The hills which bound the lake, on the side opposite to the mountains, in general, slope gradually down to the water ; but in one part, between the river Denagh and Castle-lough bay, for a distance of about two miles, a tract of low and level ground inter-

venes between them and the lake. This level ground, in itself the least interesting part of the shores of Killarney, becomes of importance to the general effect of the scene, from the striking contrast it offers to the opposite mountains, and the apparent increase it gives to their height.

The town of Killarney, from which the lake takes its name, is situated on this flat at the foot of the hills.

In attempting to communicate a more intimate knowledge of the varied scenes of Killarney, I shall begin with the demesne of Mucruss, which stretches from the foot of Turk mountain along the eastern borders of the middle and lower lakes : and here I shall beg leave to direct the attention to the three first plates, which severally contain views taken from an eminence called the Green Hills. Engravings destitute of the assistance of colours, upon whose harmonious combination so much of the pleasure which we derive from the contemplation of the works of nature depends, are at best but ill qualified for the purposes of landscape ; and the small scale to which these have necessarily been limited, sensibly diminishes the interest of the subject ; but it is presumed that they will still be instrumental in elucidating the description. Indeed, even the happiest powers of the pencil itself would be baffled in the attempt to

pourtray the innumerable beauties in this enchanting scene,

Shade unperceived so softening into shade,
And all so forming an harmonious whole,
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.

The distance of the spot where these views are taken, from the water, is about half an English mile; the intermediate space is occupied by a park richly adorned with woods, over which the spectator is supposed to look down upon the lake.

In the first plate, an outline is given of the prospect from south-south-west to north-north-west; and the mountains are distinguished by name. The other plates, as may be readily observed, are only finished views of parts of the same scenes.*

Turk mountain, from this station, appears nearly insulated, owing to the defiles at each of its extremities. One of them affords a passage to the river from the upper lake, and through the other runs a wild road leading from Killarney to Nedheen, a town situated at the head of a large estuary of the southwestern coast, called Kenmare river. The water at

* It was the original design of the author to have given one or more panorama views, from different stations; but the artist who was employed upon the first of them having failed of producing the effect that was intended, and which perhaps was not attainable on so small a scale, it was judged expedient to break the plate, and not to attempt others on the same plan.

the foot of this mountain is a part of Turk lake. The bold promontory observable on the near shore of the lake, is a remarkable mass of marble, whose pale blue colour sometimes blends insensibly into that of the water, sometimes forms a strong contrast to it, according as it is influenced by the changes of the atmosphere : it remains dark when the lake assumes a bright silvery hue ; on the contrary, when a lowering sky throws a gloom over the waves, it is as conspicuous for its brightness.

The rugged heights to the right of Turk form one side of the defile through which the river flows from the upper lake.

The water beneath Glena mountain is a part of the bay of the same name, on the lower lake, between which and Mucruss house are seen the woods of the peninsula which separates the middle and lower lake.

Tomies mountain, which has a double peak, is the next in succession to that of Glena ; the others of the same chain lie concealed from this point of view.

The low shore to the right of Tomies mountain is the most remote part of the lower lake, distant from the spectator about six miles. The mountains above it overhang the northern shore of the bay of Dingle, which opens to the Atlantic ocean, at the further distance of thirty miles.

The different points of land in the middle distance, which intercept the view of the remote boundary of

View from the Green Hills.

Smith & Co.



the lake, are islands ; amongst which that of Ross appears conspicuous, from its castle ; and the hills appearing above these islands skirt the northern shore of the lake.

The demesne of Mucruss is not less remarkable for its internal beauty, than for the variety of noble prospects which it commands of the lake and adjacent mountains. Diversified in the most pleasing manner with hill and dale, parts of it are spread into lawns clothed with the richest verdure, and adorned with graceful trees ; others are broken with marble rocks, around which native vines extend their wanton tendrils ; others are over-run with a wild entangled forest. On one side a ruin, venerable from its antiquity, rears its mossy towers amidst embowering groves ; and in an opposite direction, down the wooded mountain, a cataract

———— in headlong torrents hurls

His sounding waters ; while on every cliff

Hangs the light foam, and sparkles through the gloom.

The entrance is in a decayed village, once the flourishing seat of an iron-manufactory, and it does not prepossess the imagination in favour of the place to which it leads ; but the charms of the scene are quickly revealed after passing it. At first the road runs over hills of easy ascent, in the interior of the demesne ; afterwards, winding towards the lake, it

continues along the shore, passing through thickets which afford variety by occasionally intercepting the view of the water. The house stands near a grove, not many yards from the lake : it is not advantageously situated with regard to prospect ; but in a more elevated position it would perhaps have been deprived of shelter, so necessary to domestic comfort, and been exposed to the dreadful whirlwinds which descend from the mountains during the winter season. The fabric is old, and seems to call for repair ; but the attention of the proprietor is, at present, chiefly directed towards the improvement of the borders of the middle lake, in the vicinity of a small house or cottage lately built at the foot of the mountain. Extensive plantations of forest trees have been made at this place, stretching from the water nearly half way up the mountain ; and the improvements are annually continued by the proprietor with skill and enterprise. Of the grand effect they will produce at a future day, if they are allowed by the succeeding possessors to arrive at maturity, some notion may be formed from the prospect of the ancient hanging woods on Glenna mountain, which appear above the islands at the extremity of the lake.

It is painful to reflect how much the beauty of the lake has been impaired by the destruction of the forests ; and still more painful to learn that the few remaining venerable trees have been devoted to the

axe. By their removal, the scenery is likely to sustain an injury irreparable during the present generation ; but the vigorous efforts of Colonel Herbert to form new plantations, afford a ray of hope, that, at a future day, many of its former charms may be restored. Every person who visits Killarney must feel indebted to that spirit of improvement which displays itself amidst so extended a system of devastation.

Though the landscape has, on the whole, been improved by the alterations which have been effected in the vicinity of Turk cottage, yet objections may perhaps be started against some of them for not according with the general character of the scenery. It may admit of doubt whether the smooth shorn surface of the meadows between the cottage and the lake does not present too striking a contrast to the ruggedness of the mountain, and afford too glaring an instance of the compulsory powers of art. The ground abounded with rocks, which were removed from it with much difficulty ; and although where man resides, nature must be conquered by his perseverance and ingenuity, yet “ it is only the ostentation of the triumph,” as a professor of landscape gardening observes, “ and not the victory, that ought to offend the eye of taste.” The present trimness of the ground is said to be imputable to the over-zealous exertions of the agents who were employed to clear the spot during the absence of the proprietor ;

and, to remedy this mistake, it has been proposed to replace some of the rocks in their ancient beds. But the labour and expense of such a task, were it indeed feasible, would be a paramount objection ; and, to re-clothe the rocks with moss, and restore the picturesque attire of nature, would probably be a vain attempt. It was well observed formerly, by the ingenious Bishop Berkely, “ that the king of France might lay out another Versailles, but that with all his revenue he could not lay out another Mucruss.”

The cottage is a simple and rather pleasing building, with an arched porch in front, after the ancient English style. The little lawn before it is watered by the clear and rapid stream which flows from Turk cascade ; and across it has been thrown a Gothic bridge, whose dimensions, if intended merely to facilitate the approach to the cottage, and beyond it the mountain is quite inaccessible to horsemen, appear more than commensurate to the object ; but it is said that a new road has been planned to run from the demesne of Mucruss to the upper lake, across this bridge. After traversing the delightful glades of the demesne, this road would stretch for two miles along the border of the lake, at the base of Turk mountain ; then gradually winding to the left, it would follow the meandering course of the river which flows through the defile, and finally reach the retired confines of the upper lake. Scarcely would

it be possible to find in any country a road more diversified and beautiful. The most picturesque scenes of Killarney would then be disclosed to view, and the shores of the upper lake rendered easy of access, to which the passage is, at present, impeded by a thousand difficulties and delays. How many anxious and curious visitors would then enjoy the varied scenery of the upper lake, who now retire from Killarney, lamenting its troubled waters and its stormy skies !

The view from Turk cottage is grand and solemn. On the left, rising to a great height, appears the mountain ; its summit frequently capped with clouds, and its base washed by the lake for an extent of nearly two miles. Rocks and thick woods along the peninsula bound the lake on the opposite side ; and Glenna, rising in the distance, displays the full glories of its forests, and terminates the prospect.

Turk cascade is situated at a short distance from the cottage, at the bottom of a deep chasm in the side of the mountain. It is supplied by a river from the valley between Turk and Mangerton mountains, which is augmented occasionally by the stream from the Devil's Punch-bowl. After heavy rains, indeed, a vast body of water descends down the precipice, entirely covering the face of the rock with a sheet of white foam : the chief beauty of the fall consists in its winding course. The sides of the chasm are

thickly planted with larch trees, which might be supposed, from the rapidity of their growth, to have found a soil as congenial to their nature as that of the Alps and Apennines. As yet, these trees have not acquired the picturesque attire of age ; but, arrived at maturity, and bowed down by the storm, their appearance must give enchantment to the scene. The eye of fancy will perhaps imagine that it already beholds their withered arms, grey with lichens, extended athwart the dark rocks, whilst the parent stem, prostrated in the flood, lies contending with the impetuosity of the current. Below the cascade the water is lost in a deep ravine, but it soon emerges, and, after passing under the bridge, is seen, at a distance, gliding smoothly into the lake.

Between Turk cottage and the mansion-house of Mucruss, the grounds possess fewer attractions than in any other part ; which is rather attributable to the half-cultivated, half-neglected state in which they are suffered to remain, than to any deficiency in natural beauty. The surface is pleasingly varied and well wooded ; but too many of the trees stand in even rows and formal clumps ; and several stone fences, by their artificial formality, offend the eye which takes delight in the wild irregularity of nature. Roughness and negligence were not wanting here to increase the interest which the more improved parts of the demesne inspire, as the peninsula

between the two lakes, still in a state of native wildness, affords them the best relief imaginable. So sudden a transition, indeed, from the embellished scenes of art to the wildness of the forest, is rarely paralleled.

The peninsula commences at the house, and extends as far as Brickeen bridge, a distance of two miles. It consists of continuous masses of rocks slightly covered with earth, which, notwithstanding the seeming poverty of the soil, are clothed with trees of considerable growth. At the commencement of the peninsula, the branches of the trees are so closely interwoven, and the rocks so rugged, that they form a barrier impervious to persons on horseback, excepting in very few places; but there is a commodious road through these woods beginning at the mansion-house, which extends the whole length of the peninsula, and thence across Brickeen bridge to the island of the same name: formerly it reached as far as the island of Dinis, but the way at present is not passable for carriages beyond the bridge; and between Dinis and Brickeen islands there is no longer any communication.

In passing along this road, the eye is gratified with the most delightful views of the lake and distant hills, opening at intervals between the breaks in the woods; they would, however, be attended with greater interest, if the vistas were more numerous on each

side : for in several places the trees along the roadside grow so very closely together as to form a skreen which does not admit even a glimpse of the water for half a mile together. Had all the views between the house and the extremity of the peninsula been nearly the same, it would be judicious, perhaps, to leave the road secluded, as it is at present ; for the same view would excite fresh interest, if the eye returned to it after having been confined for a time to the gloom of a thick wood ; but the scenery here is so much diversified, that, were the whole coast exposed, not a single step would seem tedious. The wooded islands, which appear at a short distance from the shore, are a constant source of new delight. One moment they appear to confine the lake within very narrow limits ; the next, a long expanse of water, with reaches of the distant shore, is discovered between the channels which separate them. The coast of the peninsula itself is also extremely picturesque. Numerous little inlets indent it, some of which are bounded by massive rocks rising to the height of fifty feet above the lake ; others are shaded by the thick pendent foliage of tall trees, gracefully disposed along the water side. The pedestrian who will take the pains of forcing his way along the shore, which, owing to the close intertexture of the branches, and the abundance of hollies, brambles, and thick underwood, is very difficult of access, will find

himself amply repaid by the variety of the scenery. The same prospects, it is true, may be more readily commanded, by proceeding in a boat along the shore, and occasionally landing; but the pleasure they afford under the different circumstances of a deliberate approach from the water, or of an adventurous ramble through the woods, varies considerably. In the one case the person advances, aware in some measure of what he is to behold; in the other, the views burst upon him unforeseen, producing additional pleasures by their unexpected appearance. In this, as in other instances where the object is of higher import, the pleasure arising from the attainment of our desires is often lessened by anticipation during the moments of pursuit.

Towards the centre, the peninsula assumes a new character. Here it is varied by extensive lawns, some of which are entirely surrounded by woods, whilst others open to the lake. There is a large pool in the middle of one of these lawns, fringed with graceful trees, whose retired and tranquil aspect forcibly rivets the attention, in despite of the much more magnificent scenery in its vicinity. The banks on one side are considerably elevated; and on their summit stands a rude unfinished building,*

* When it is considered how much has been done to impair the beauty of some of the enchanting lakes in the north of England,

which appears to have been designed for a rustic temple or pleasure-house ; and indeed a more advantageous scite for such a building could not have been fixed upon, as the spot not only commands an extensive prospect of the lake and mountains, but of the rich verdant slopes and thick woods of Mueruss—

Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Imbrowned the noontide bowers.

Beyond this delightful spot, towards the point of Camillan, the woods assume a still wilder aspect, and the deepening gloom conveys the idea of the most savage solitude, when all at once, at the bottom of a mass of rocks which a sudden break in the woods discloses, a small cottage appears, whose blue curling smoke rising through the trees gives animation to a scene which but a moment before seemed remote from the haunts of men. It is impossible to approach it without feeling half disposed to envy its inmates the possession of so retired and romantic a dwelling ; though the poor peasants who reside in it, “ children of penury and heirs to toil,” are perhaps only sensible of the inconvenience of a situation

by persons of false taste erecting buildings which they call ornamental, it may be deemed a fortunate circumstance that Killarney is still suffered to appear in native simplicity.

removed from the seat of their daily labour, and incapable, from the barrenness of its rocks, of producing the roots upon which they are accustomed to feed.

This house was erected for the superintendant of a neighbouring copper-mine on the borders of Turk lake, but which has not been worked for some years past. When abandoned, the vein of ore had not failed, nor had any inconvenience, it is said, been experienced from the influx of water, although the situation of the mine, close upon the margin of the lake, appears very perilous. The discontinuance of the works was rather to be attributed to the mismanagement, or want of unanimity, amongst the parties concerned in it. At present, however, the mine is full of water, and a considerable sum of money was ineffectually expended of late in attempts to draw it off. It is asserted, though I can scarcely conceive upon good information, that the water has not flowed in from the lake through any rent or chasm in the rocks, as happened at Ross island, on the opposite side of the lower lake, where a very valuable work was destroyed by inundation, in consequence of cutting too close to the water.

The principal produce of this mine on the peninsula was copper pyrites; but amongst the rubbish, which lies around the mouth of the old shafts, numerous specimens are observable of grey copper ore,

and malachite; of brown iron stone, grey cobalt ore, red cobalt ore, both in crystallized germinations and incrustations; besides various other mineral substances. Some of the specimens of cobalt taken from this place are extremely rich; and hopes were once entertained that this valuable mineral might be discovered in sufficient quantities to become an important object of commerce. A considerable quantity of it was actually gathered, and sent over to an ingenious potter in England for trial; but it was found to be too intimately mixed with copper and iron to be of much value in his manufacture.*

The peninsula, for about two-thirds of its length, is formed of limestone, resting upon grauwacke. The limestone is of a pale blue colour, and of a dense compact nature; the same species of stone extends along the shores of Mucruss and Cahirnane, towards the river Deanagh. The islands at the mouth of Flesk river are entirely composed of it, and it abounds upon Ross, Innisfallen, and the Brown islands. Marble of various colours is found mixed with the common limestone in Mucruss de-

* Cobalt is used for the purpose of staining glass, enamels, earthen-ware, and porcelain, to which it communicates a beautiful blue colour. The well-known substance called smalt blue is nothing more than glass coloured with cobalt, and finely levigated. The crude ore, if of a good quality, is worth, I am informed, two guineas per pound. It is principally procured from Saxony.

mesne and on Ross island. Towards the extremity of the peninsula grauwacke appears, and of this material are formed the islands in Glenna bay, and on that side of the lake. No limestone is again observable for many miles beyond Killarney.

As the deposit of limestone is confined to the hollow or basin which contains the great lower lake, it would appear to belong to what are termed the *Fletz* rocks by Werner, resting immediately on his transition series, in the same manner as the limestone does under Ingleborough, in Yorkshire, and near Kendal, in Westmoreland.

The neighbouring mountains consist principally of grauwacke and grauwacke slate, of which last a quarry is wrought upon Turk mountain, on the side next to Turk lake. Immense veins of quartz, as is usual with rocks of this description, intersect the mountains.

On the shores of Ross and Innisfallen islands, and nearly on a level with the water at its ordinary height, the limestone rocks are partially covered with a siliceous incrustation, apparently the remains of a stratum of chert. It is of a very dark greenish colour, full of fissures, and may very readily be detached and divided into small fragments.

Petrified shells, which present an interesting phenomenon, are found adhering in a similar manner to the grauwacke rocks at the extremity of the penin-

sula on the side next to Turk lake. Their forms are very distinct, and whilst their cavities are entirely filled with granular limestone, which cements them to the rocks, their exterior surface is coated with silix. Probably these shells formed part of a calcareous stratum long since washed away ; or rather, the space which the mere shell itself once occupied in the limestone having been accidentally filled with silix, bearing the exact appearance of the original form, this substance has preserved the calcareous matter within from the action of the air and water, and thus kept it connected with the rock. It is somewhat remarkable, that no traces of shells are discoverable, that I could perceive, among the calcareous rocks in the vicinity ; but it is nevertheless most probable, from the siliceous coating and calcareous interior of those already described, that they did not belong to beds of grauwacke. The shells are principally of the kinds called Telenites and Turbinites.

On returning from a ramble through the wilds of the peninsula, the ornamental scenes around Mucruss house appear with additional charms. Indeed, during the height of summer, when the sultry heats are tempered by the breezes from the lake, when the air is filled with the fragrance of wild-flowers and of the new-mown hay, and when the eye can wander at leisure over the varieties of the landscape, one would



be led to imagine that this was the region of delight, where Nature had unlocked her choicest treasures. But the pleasure of the dream is often dispelled by the vicissitudes of the weather.

——— Exhaling from the Atlantic surge,
Wild world of waters, distant clouds ascend
In vapoury confluence, deepening cloud on cloud.

These vast bodies of mist and vapour are attracted by the lofty mountains of Kerry, and descend in torrents of rain, deluging the country at a season when fine weather and a bright sun are most wanting to ripen the fruits of the earth. The romantic wanderer, who then wades through the long wet grass, sprinkled by every bush he passes under, and excluded from the charms of the prospect by impenetrable clouds, reflects upon the voluptuous descriptions which he has heard, and may perhaps lament his own credulity.

The old abbey of Irrelagh, or of Mucruss, as it is now commonly called, stands on an eminence in the richest part of the domain, at a short distance from the road leading to the mansion-house. A few years ago it was generally lamented that the effect of these ruins in the landscape was lost, from their being so thickly enveloped by trees. The woodman has lately been employed to open them to view on the side of the church, and now perhaps rather too much is seen. Had the large Gothic east window, and part of the

church only been revealed, by lopping off the lower branches of some of the intervening trees, enough would have been shown to catch the eye ; and the ruin, from being half concealed, would have appeared to greater advantage, and have excited more curiosity, than it does at present.* As the ash trees which grew on this side were, however, extremely old, and decayed at the top, it was probably found more advisable to remove them altogether than to leave them standing in a deformed state, almost bare of foliage. Perhaps a better effect would have resulted from opening the prospect of that part of the abbey in which the monks used to reside, instead of cutting away any of the trees on the side of the church.

A ruined church is a common object, which, independent of the picturesque beauty it may possess, excites little interest ; but the sight of a monastery carries us back to distant ages, and gives rise to a train of reflection which every mind of sensibility feels a pleasure in indulging. We remember that these places were the asylums of men who, voluntarily renouncing the seducing pleasures of the world, devoted themselves to the services of charity and of religion. Hither the aged peasants from the neighbouring hamlets flocked, in the hours of sickness and

* *Mezzo aperta ancora, è mezzo ascosa,
Quanto si mostra men tanto è piu bella.*

of affliction, to obtain the advice and consolation of the ghostly fathers, to crave the boon of charity, or implore the blessing of Heaven on the labours of their toiling offspring. Hither, during the ages of violence and rapine, those who by inclination were disposed to retirement and to ease could withdraw in safety from the dangers of contending factions, and devote themselves to the calm and tranquil pursuits of literature. These were the sacred retreats of learning, where the germs of knowledge were preserved, till a more genial season bade them spring forth and flourish in open day.

At the same time, we cannot behold these ancient fabrics, their dismal aisles, their dark and narrow cells, without drawing a comparison favourable to ourselves between the gloomy and bigoted notions of monkery and the more enlightened opinions of modern days. Far from regretting their decline, the philosophic mind triumphs at the dissolution of institutions which were disgraced by vices of the grossest nature ; where superstition was fostered, and the streams of knowledge polluted at their source. In this very abbey a miraculous image of the Virgin Mary was preserved, by whose portentous movements, directed at will, the friars imposed on the credulity of many an unsuspecting votary. The Irish monastics, indeed, very soon lost sight of that virtuous and rigorous system which in early times had

gained them the esteem and admiration of surrounding nations. Giraldus, who travelled in Ireland in the reign of Henry the Second, accuses the monks of that period of the grossest hypocrisy and licentiousness; and says, that, amongst the many thousands in that country, scarcely one was to be found who, after the incessant exertions of fasting and praying, did not make himself ample amends during the night, for the privations of the preceding day, by large draughts of wine, and potations of various kinds, to an excess which passed the bounds of decency; and he adds, that, where wine had established its empire, it might be deemed a miracle if Venus did not also rule.*

The abbey of Mucruss is a very picturesque object from several points of view. It is seen to most advantage from the south and west, within the precincts of the grove.

* I transcribe the whole of the original passage, as to some persons it may appear interesting: "Sed utinam post longa jejunia, tam sobrii fuerint quam serii, tam veri quam severi; tam puri quam duri; tam existentes quam apparentes. Inter tot enim millia, vix unum invenies, qui post jugem tam jejuniorum quam orationum instantiam, vino variisque potionibus, diurnos labores, enormius quam deceret noctu non redimat. Diem itaque naturalem tanquam ex æquo dividentes, lucidaque spiritui, tempora nocturna quoque carni dedicantes, sicut de luce lucis operibus indulgent, sic et in tenebris, ad tenebrarum opera convertuntur. Unde et hoc pro miraculo duci potest, quod ubi vina dominantur Venus non regnat."—*Gir. Camb. Top. Hib. De Cléricis et Monasticis.*



Here are

—— deep empty tombs,
And dells and mouldering shrines, with old decay
Rustic and green, and wide embowering shades
Shot from the crooked clefts of nodding towers.

The whole length of the church is about one hundred feet, its breadth twenty-four. The steeple, built upon four lofty pointed arches, under which there is a free communication, stands between the nave and the chancel. The principal entrance is at the west end, under a large pointed arch of blueish marble, embellished by several plain mouldings, which are well wrought, and in good preservation. From this entrance a very pleasing view opens of the great eastern window, which is seen through the arches of the steeple ; and also of the large portal of the transept on the south side of the nave. The cloister was the best executed part of the whole fabric ; and it is still perfect. It consists of a quadrangle of forty-six feet, encompassed by a vaulted walk six feet wide, whose pillars and arches are formed of blueish and pale red marble. The pillars are finished exactly alike, but the arches vary both in number and in form. At two of the contiguous sides they are of the sharp-pointed kind, commonly known by the name of Gothic, and are ten in number ; the corresponding sides contain twelve semicircular arches.

How this capricious variety, so frequently to be observed in the religious buildings of those infant days of art and taste, was first introduced, we can now only conjecture : beauty and utility alike disown it as their offspring. Probably it originated in the dissensions which arose among the brotherhood, before the style of their future residence was determined : and of the obstinacy with which they contended, and the folly with which they compromised this important subject, the abbey of Mucruss to this day remains a striking and a melancholy monument.

At two of the opposite corners of the cloister there are stairs leading to the cells over the vaulted walk, and to the chief apartments of the abbey. The latter are in a very dilapidated state : but several of the cells remain entire ; and under the little grates by which they were lighted, one may still see the broad flat stones upon which the monks offered up their orisons, worn and polished by the pressure of many a weary knee. Around the summit of the building there is a safe walk, defended by an embattled parapet. The lake from hence is barely visible through the trees ; but, were a very few of the intervening branches removed, the view would be delightful : it is impossible, indeed, not to extol the taste which the monks displayed in choosing a situation for their abbey.

The remembrance of what this place once was, is fresh in the minds of the country people ; and many a pious devotee, impressed with a fond belief of its sanctity, may be seen before the tombs and ancient shrines in deep and earnest prayer. The appearance of these poor people, clad in long russet garments, prostrated on their knees, and counting their beads with all the enthusiasm of devotion, is quite in character with the solemnity of the scene, and calculated to increase the melancholy and religious awe which the contemplation of so venerable a ruin is likely to inspire.

In the centre of the cloister grows a remarkably large yew tree. It rises to the height of fourteen feet, with a straight and smooth bole, and then throws out several large arms, which mount above the highest walls, and overshadow the greater part of the building. Such is the gloominess diffused over the cloister by its thick and dusky foliage, that the bat is frequently observed flitting through the vaulted arches at noon day. This tree, it may be supposed, was long a favourite with the monks ; but, much as they might have rejoiced in its flourishing state, had they continued to occupy the monastery until the present day, they must have consented, however reluctantly, either to strip it of its honours, or to relinquish the studies of their darkened cells. The vaults

and winding passages of the abbey are still more gloomy than the cloister:—

There, through thick walls, oblique the broken light,
From narrow loop-holes, quivers to the sight.

This obscurity adds much to the effect of the ruin; and, combined with the stillness and solitude of deep retirement, the fragments of monumental grandeur, and the frightful spectacles of mouldering mortality, forms an association highly calculated to inspire the imagination with visionary fears. As you wander on, the mind, yielding to the impression of such gloomy images, becomes abstracted from this world. The shade of every waving branch is converted to a spectre, and the echoes of the footsteps to the whispering of the ideal inhabitants. The startled senses distrust their own perception, and the delusion can scarcely be dispelled by returning to the cheerful regions of light and life.

These effects are not fictitious. An instance once occurred to my own knowledge, in which a visit to this place was attended with almost fatal consequences to two young ladies. Having strayed on before the rest of their party, they unexpectedly found themselves, near the close of the day, at the portal of the abbey. Curiosity prompted them to enter; and, unsuspecting of any cause of alarm, they heedlessly passed on to the inmost recesses of the building.

The frightful objects which there assailed their eyes urged them to instant flight. In vain, however, did they endeavour to retrace the way by which they had entered : the intricacy of the passages baffled their eager attempts to escape. Overcome by terror, they fainted away ; and it was not until a long time after they were discovered, that the anxious efforts of their friends succeeded in restoring them to animation. In reality, they had beheld objects which might have struck a momentary panic into minds less delicately framed : they had found themselves suddenly and unexpectedly environed by all the horrors of a charnel-house.

This abbey is a common and favourite place of burial : the limits of the cemetery are small ; the depth of the soil inconsiderable. The consequence is, that coffins, with their mouldering contents, are not unfrequently removed to make room for others, long before decency can warrant such a measure. In a passage leading to the cloister I once found a head, with a considerable part of the flesh of the face and nearly the entire hair upon it, literally rolling under foot ; and though the place from time to time is carefully cleared, yet the bones, skulls, and coffin-boards that are prematurely dug up, quickly accumulate again. The boards are deposited in the vaults, one of which, adjoining to the church, is now entirely filled with them to the very crown of the arch : the

bones and skulls are heaped up in the angle formed by the transept and the nave of the church, at the outside of the building, where many thousands of them may be seen, bleached to an extraordinary degree of whiteness by their exposure to the weather.*

Persons who can afford the expense, have excavations made in the rock, and tombs built over them, with large trap-doors at one end, removable by iron rings ; but the poorer classes of the people generally content themselves with depositing the coffin in a cranny of the rock, and covering it with loose stones. A day scarcely passes without a burial at Mucruss abbey ; and disagreeable as it must be to the proprietor of the demesne, especially in this country, where such a concourse of people attends the ceremony of interment with cries and howlings, yet it is not thought expedient to oppose it.

The attachment of the Irish peasantry to their family burying-place is boundless. Bodies are not unfrequently conveyed from a distance of twenty miles across the mountains, to be interred at Mucruss abbey ; men, women, and children, following in multitudes : and were any attempts made to prevent fu-

* In the cemetery of Buttevant Abbey, in the county of Limerick, the skulls and bones have been piled up in the form of a thick wall, against which there grows a very large old ivy tree, which binds them strongly together ; but this is not an unusual circumstance in many other parts of Ireland as well as England.

ture burials in the abbey, it probably might, even in this peaceable neighbourhood, be the occasion of alarming disturbances.

A funeral procession formerly, in consequence of the common notion entertained by the peasants that it was an act of duty, if they happened to be within sight, to follow it for some distance, was wont to be productive of idleness throughout the district which it passed. Travellers that were met on the road, though strangers to the country, and unacquainted with the deceased, were expected to do the same; and if they showed any unwillingness, they were sometimes compelled to turn, and testify their respect by a temporary attendance. This custom, like that which still obtains of assembling a numerous body of followers to attend a funeral, is of high antiquity; and appears to be derived from the ancient division of the people into septs or small tribes, and from the petty warfares in which they were almost unceasingly engaged. The funeral of a chief, or of a distinguished person, was considered as a rallying point; where the friends and adherents of the deceased, and those who were disposed to protect his successors and defend their inheritance, were expected to show themselves. Absence on these occasions indicated, or was construed into, enmity or disrespect. Persons in inferior situations soon began to claim an equal tribute of attention from their kins-

folks and acquaintances ; and a custom, which afforded an opportunity for the display of friendship and good-will, readily found its favourers down to the present time. Idleness has also a great share in collecting people on these occasions.

As the crowds which are thus assembled cannot all be afflicted with grief, it follows that these meetings, where numerous friends and acquaintances, male and female, are brought together, are more productive of festivity and joy than sorrow and mourning. The countenances of many who attend, far from being expressive of seriousness, betray marks, on the contrary, of the most indecent merriment ; and, in some instances, doubts might even be entertained of the reality of the grief of those persons who do appear to mourn. It is almost needless here to remark, that these observations pertain to the funerals of the lower classes of the people.

I once met a funeral procession in its passage from the town of Killarney to Mucruss abbey, which exhibited a remarkable instance of apparent vehemence of grief and real indifference. The coffin was placed in a small hearse under a canopy, and upon it was seated an old grey-headed woman, who seemed to be actually convulsed with sorrow. She uttered the most doleful cries ; alternately smote her breast and the lid of the coffin ; and occasionally prostrating herself upon it, endeavoured as it were to em-

brace the once-beloved object of her affections. Such demonstrations of excessive grief could not be seen without interest, and I was irresistibly led to mix among the train, when, to my great surprise, I found that she had not shed a single tear. After a few minutes, her clamour was suspended, and she turned to speak with indifference to the people near her; on many of whose countenances were to be traced emotions more in unison with her levity than with the semblance of her former sorrow.* I was not able to

* It would be wrong to infer from this recital that the lower classes of the Irish are devoid of sensibility; on the contrary, where strong demonstrations of passion are commonly observed amongst a people, it may fairly be concluded that they are possessed of acute feelings. But to the violence of grief or joy amongst the Irish, the same importance is not to be attached as amongst a more sedate and sober people. Giraldus Cambrensis, who was no inaccurate observer of the character of the Irish, though credulous and mistaken in many points, says that all their actions were immoderate, and their passions most vehement:—"Est enim gens hæc cunctis fere in actibus immoderata, et in omnes affectus vehementissima." This remark is still apposite, and may be illustrated by the following incident:

One morning, whilst I was sitting in my apartment in Killarney, giving some directions to a tradesman, a sudden noise was heard through the town;

A troublous noise

That seemed some perilous tumult to desine,
Confused with women's cries and shouts of boyes.

The man dropped on his knees, crossed his forehead, and uttered a prayer. On looking out of the window, the people in the streets all appeared in the extremity of distress: some piteously wringing

learn whether she was one of those persons common at Killarney who are hired to attend funerals and to sing the death-song ; but very probably she was.

The death-song, or death-cry, as it more properly deserves to be, and indeed is most commonly called, is there kept up, incessantly, for several days and nights in the house of the deceased : those women who have the best lungs and the most lively imagination get the most money for their services. A friend of mine was induced, by curiosity, to procure a translation of one of these extemporaneous death-

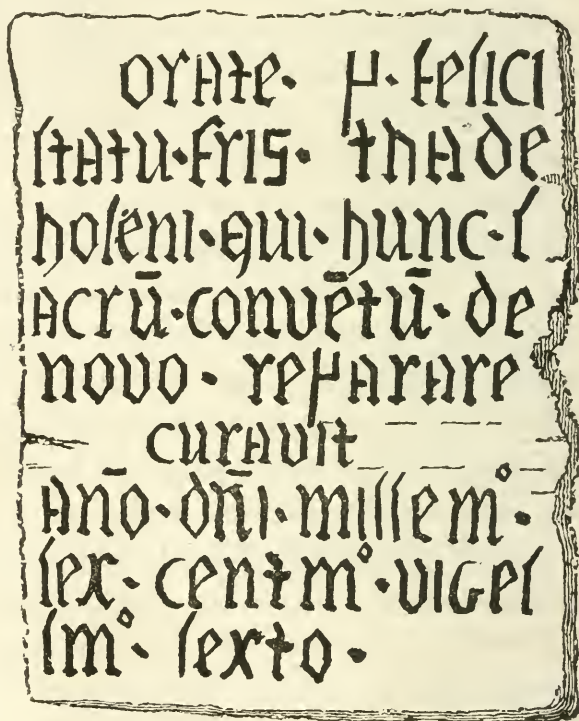
their hands, others beating their breasts. One of the principal inhabitants came running out of his house, with loud lamentations clasping his hands, and exclaiming, in all the bitterness of grief, that " If he had had daughters that morning, he was now childless." Had an earthquake swallowed up a part of the town, or half the inhabitants been put to the sword, the confusion could not have been greater. The moment was really awful. It was impossible to learn from the people, deeply occupied as they were with their individual sufferings, what had happened ; and dragoons were seen, with drawn swords, galloping across the end of the street. An officer who was exercising some companies of militia in the court before Lord Kenmare's house, had actually marched them into the street, and had drawn them up ready for action, before he could get the least intimation of the occasion of the tumult. At last we learned that the Roman Catholic chapel had fallen upon great numbers of the people, and that the troopers were hastening to the spot to keep off the crowd, and to facilitate the removal of those killed or wounded. I ran to the place, prepared to witness some spectacle of excessive calamity, when the intelligence I received removed every uneasy apprehension. The joists of the gallery, which was exceedingly thronged in consequence of a festival, had cracked. A general panic followed, but not an individual was injured.

songs. It dwelt much on those virtues in the deceased which are the usual subject of admiration among uncivilized nations ; and, in particular, on his extreme hospitality ; each verse concluding with the burthen, “ O may the grass never grow before his door !”

The exact period of the foundation of Mucruss abbey is not well ascertained. According to some statements, it was founded as early as the year 1340 ; but the authority of Wading* has been adduced to the contrary, who declares that he had seen a bull of Pope Paul the Second, which proved that it was founded by one of the earls of Desmond, and not until the year 1449. In the *Monasticon Hibernicum*, by the Reverend Mervyn Archdall, the foundation is fixed at 1440, and ascribed to Donald M'Carthy. It belonged to the Conventual Franciscans ; whose rules, though so much relaxed from the original institutions of their patron and founder St Francis, as to have occasioned a final schism in the order, yet still did not allow them to hold extensive territorial possessions ; but in the superior construction of their convents, and the convenience of their accommodations, the brotherhood endeavoured to make themselves ample amends for the mortifications to which they were otherwise subjected.

* Smith's History of Kerry.

This abbey, either by forfeiture or surrender, devolved to the crown at the time of the reformation, and Queen Elizabeth made a grant of it to Robert Collam; but from an inscription on a stone in the north wall of the chancel of the church, of which the following is a transcript, it may be inferred that the monks continued to inhabit it long after this period.



Orate p (*pro*) felici
 statu fris (*fratris.*) Thade (*i*)

Holeni qui hunc s-
 acrū (*m*) convētū (*conventum*) de
 novo reparare
 curavit
 Anno Domini millesimo
 sexcentesimo vigesimo sexto.

“ Pray for the happy state of brother Thadeus Holenus, who superintended the rebuilding or repairing of this sacred convent, A. D. 1626.” The beginning of the last word on the fifth line is obliterated, and the remainder of it, *rare*, can only be traced with difficulty. I have made the word *reparare*. The use of this character, which is Meso-Gothic, at so late a period, and long after it had ceased to be employed in England, and even in other parts of Ireland, is a proof of the slow progress which arts and literature had made in Kerry.

The history of the decay of this abbey, notwithstanding its more recent date, is involved in still deeper obscurity. Dr Smith, in his History of Kerry, informs us, that in his days the bell of the convent was discovered in the lake, at a short distance from the shore of Mucruss; from which circumstance it may be inferred that the building, at some period, suffered from violence. Probably the soldiers of the parliamentary army were instrumental to its destruc-

tion ; of whose outrages the country about Killarney was a distinguished scene.

From the borders of the grove which envelops the abbey, a smooth verdant lawn stretches down to the lake. On leaving the demesne of Mucruss, if you should have entered it by the gate at the village, it is desirable, for the sake of variety, to traverse this lawn, keeping near the water : and after having crossed the little stream which bounds the demesne, there is an agreeable ride along the gravelly beach, at the head of Castle Lough bay ; from which place a private avenue leads to the high road.

As you pass along this part of Mucruss, two small islands are observable at a short distance from the main shore. One of them is called Heron or Friar's island ; the other Osprey rock : it better deserves, however, the name of Cormorant rock, from being so much more frequently the resort of the latter bird. Seldom, indeed, is it seen without many of these voracious animals sitting upon its craggy point, in eager expectation of the approach of their finny prey. The neighbouring island is frequented by herons ; and, what seems remarkable, these birds never invade each other's territories. Numerous other aquatic birds are also generally to be seen about this part of the lake, attracted by the fish which frequent the shallows.

In light-wing'd squadrons, gulls of every name,
Screaming discordant, o'er the surface hang,
And ceaseless stoop for prey.

Their devious flights enliven the scene; and their shrill cries, whilst they add to the wildness of the scene, are not devoid of interest.

Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,
Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever dwells
And only there, please highly for their sake.

The noisy birds which commonly frequent the seashores were not beneath the verse of Homer in his description of the enchanting island of Calypso; and it will not readily be admitted that his faithful representation of nature is less pleasing than that of the writers of romance, who, on all occasions, were wont to fill the groves of fairy land with birds of melodious notes and gaudy plumage.*

The heron breeds in the woods of Mucruss, and pains are taken to preserve it from the wanton at-

* Εἰθα δὲ τ' ὄρνιθες τανυσίπτεροι εἰνάζοντο,
Σκῶπές τ', ἱρηκῆς τε, τανίγλωσσοί τε κοῤῥῶναι
Εἰνάλιναι, τῆσιν τε θαλάσσια ἔργα μέμνηναι.

Od. lib. 5. l. 65.

Thus rendered by Pope :

On the high branches waving in the storm
Birds of the broadest wing their mansion form,
The chough, the sea-mew, and loquacious crow,
And scream aloft, and skim the deep below.

tacks of fowlers : nor is this bird undeserving of protection, whose appearance is so picturesque, whether beheld stalking amongst the withered reeds, on the brink of the pool, or steering with slow and solemn wing through the glades of the forest, where the dark foliage forms a relief to his “ pale grey plumes.”

The old fortress of Castle lough stands on an insulated rock near the head of the bay. Its position might have rendered it strong ; but it was too much limited in extent to have been a place of great importance. So completely was it demolished by the parliamentary army, that the few remaining fragments of the walls are now scarcely discernible from the rocks on which they rest. The name of Castle lough is at present given to a neat little villa belonging to Mrs Delany, the grounds of which are prettily disposed.

At Castle lough the flat commences, which has already been mentioned in the general description of the boundaries of the lower lake. As far as the river Flesk it forms a part of the grounds of Cahir-nane, the seat of Mr Richard Herbert, a place well wooded, and possessing many natural advantages. The original entrance to the house is through an avenue of fine old trees, which the proprietor, uninfluenced by that spirit of innovation which characterises the present age, has carefully preserved ; while he has evinced his taste in the judicious choice of a



new approach from another part of the domain, which passes alternately through woods and lawns, and between large masses of rocks, covered, like the small islands of the lake, with shrubs and evergreens. The straight avenues, in which our ancestors so much delighted, have surely too often been treated with disrespect, and condemned without mature consideration. Many a mansion, by their removal, has lost that venerable aspect which it before enjoyed. In summer their shade is refreshing ; and though they can rarely lay claim to picturesque beauty, yet occasionally they are highly pleasing.

Ye fallen avenues, once more I mourn
Your fate unmerited ; once more rejoice
That yet a remnant of your race survives.
How airy and how light the graceful arch !

The tall limes which border upon the road leading from Flesk bridge to Killarney, furnish a remarkable example of the agreeable effect of straight rows of trees in certain situations ; and seldom fail to prepossess the stranger in favour of the town, who approaches it for the first time in this direction. Uniting over head, they form a lofty shade impervious to the meridian sun. Every disagreeable object, usually met with in the outskirts of a country town, is effectually excluded from view by the foliage on each side ; and in the distance, between the rows,

are just seen the church and adjoining houses. That such avenues are not more common, especially in the neighbourhood of towns, where they afford the inhabitants agreeable and sheltered walks, is much to be regretted. Surely the inconvenience which arises from the moisture they diffuse over the roads, is more than counterbalanced by their shade and beautiful appearance in summer.

The flat which extends from the river Flesk to the road leading to Ross castle, is occupied by small fields bare of trees, and mostly divided by stone fences. Still further on, at the opposite side of the road, lie the gardens and pleasure-grounds attached to the house of the Earl of Kenmare. It would be difficult to find a more striking instance of the perverted taste of former times than this place exhibits. Though the noble person by whose order it was laid out, was lord of the soil for miles around, and might have fixed his residence where he pleased, yet, as if Nature had in those days lost the power of pleasing, no advantage has been taken of the varied scenery of Killarney : the most beautiful and commanding situations were all disregarded, and the only flat piece of ground in the country studiously selected for a display of the insipid regularities of a Dutch garden.

No pleasing intricacies intervene,
No artful wildness to perplex the scene ;

Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.

Beyond the precincts of the old gardens, walks and shrubberies have been laid out in a more modern taste, and other improvements on an extensive scale, it is said, have been projected. The trees near the house are large, and numerous grand mountain prospects might readily be opened between them ; but, owing to the lowness of the ground and the evenness of its surface, the lake can never be seen to advantage. At the end of the long straight vista which opens behind the house, it just appears a narrow streak in the horizon, like a distant river. In a less romantic country, these grounds would be thought very beautiful.

In attempting to account for the peculiar evenness of the ground at the rear of Lord Kenmare's mansion, one might be induced at first sight to suppose that the lake had once flowed over it, and had afterwards contracted within its original limits : but appearances in the face of nature are deceitful, and often baffle the most ingenious conjectures that can be formed concerning their causes. That the lake has preserved nearly the same level, for many ages, is obvious from the discovery of the remains of an ancient wood beneath the turf-bog which joins that part of the grounds called the West Demesne. On the borders of Ross bay, where this bog has been entirely

cut away, the stumps of the trees now stand exposed to view, in an upright position, firmly fixed in the original soil upon which they grew. They consist mostly of birch and pine ; and if, from their dimensions, a judgment may be formed of the trees which they supported, the latter must have been of immense size.

There is reason to suppose that turf-bogs, in many instances, have been formed by the ruins of forests overwhelmed by floods, or prostrated by hurricanes ; between the branches of whose trees a nidus was afforded for the accumulated growth of fibrous plants, of which, with the admixture of a small proportion of earthy particles, the turf or peat of this country is almost universally formed. The solid stems of the trees, less subject to decay, are commonly found in bogs at a great depth, and sometimes in such excellent preservation that they are esteemed equal to any other timber for substantial buildings. I have seen some very beautiful and expensive pieces of furniture made of solid bog yew. The pine and fir woods, though inapplicable to such valuable purposes, are not devoid of use ; amongst others, being highly inflammable, splinters of them are substituted for candles among the poor.

The peasantry are in the constant practice, with the permission of their landlords, of raising trees out of the bogs in this part of the country. They first

search for them by pushing down long spears through the spongy superincumbent mass ; and having ascertained their exact position, they open a large trench. The trees are sometimes easily taken up by these means ; but occasionally it happens that a large lateral branch, or a spur underneath, holds the stem firmly down, contrary to the expectation of the adventurers. Additional trenches must then be opened, corresponding with their direction ; and even these efforts in complicated cases often proving abortive, they are ultimately reduced to the necessity of abandoning altogether the object of their pursuit, or of resorting to the painful and unprofitable labour of severing it into small pieces by the axe. Their exertions are also sometimes baffled by the sudden influx of water, and sometimes by the falling in of the banks of the trenches. Amidst impediments so frequent, it is obvious that profit must be precarious ; and from inquiries amongst numerous parties that I found digging for trees on the hills near the town of Killarney, relative to their general success, I was led to conclude that a great portion of valuable labour was lost in this uncertain pursuit ; but the persons engaged in it, regardless of frequent failure, and animated, like those intent upon a game of chance, with the hopes of large gains, seemed to prefer it to the ordinary occupations of industry.

There are many bogs, however, in which no re-

mains of trees can be discovered ; and that their formation is not dependent in every instance upon the decay of the forest, is evident from the circumstance of their being sometimes situated upon rocks where no trees could possibly have grown. On the summit of an insulated pile of rocks at the mouth of Ross bay, called O'Donoghue's prison, there is a bog of the depth of some feet, which plainly demonstrates this fact.

The little stream called the Deanagh forms a boundary to the flat, on the north. Beyond it the ground is diversified with gentle knolls covered with verdure, and adorned with some fine trees, beneath which there are walks commanding very charming prospects of the lake. The pleasure-grounds attached to Kenmare house extend a considerable distance in this direction, and a wooden bridge across the stream connects them with the old gardens. By the liberality of the noble proprietor, strangers are permitted to frequent these agreeable walks, as well as those on the flat ground beyond the precincts of the gardens, until the close of day, when the gates are shut.

Near the river Deanagh, the shores of the lake are indented by numerous little sandy creeks or recesses, bounded at each side by masses of rocks, which overlook the islands at the mouth of Ross bay. From the promontory known by the name of Reen point,

the woods of Innisfallen island, which lie just at such a distance that individual trees can be distinguished amongst the tufts of foliage, with their reflections in the lake, appear with uncommon beauty. It is from the summit of these rocks alone, however, that the prospect fully unfolds its charms. The spectator who stands on the sandy beach between them, or on other parts of the low shore, can command but a very contracted view of the water; and as he retires across the flat towards the hills, it becomes less and less conspicuous, and at last nearly vanishes from the eye: but, on ascending the heights, it re-appears, and assumes breadth and importance at every step. Of the effect of its first appearance from the foot of the hills an idea may be formed, from the view which is here inserted of Flesk bridge, taken from the banks of that river. At this elevation the lake seems to be only a continuation of the river Flesk, which had overflowed its banks, and spread over a tract of low plashy ground.* On ascending higher, the wooded islands become more distinct; and the lake, instead of appearing like a dilatation of the Flesk, rather wears the aspect of a majestic navigable river, which received its tributary stream whilst rolling on through

* The different points of land which are seen in the middle distance of this view are the islands in and about Ross bay; the large mountain in the distance is a part of Tomies. The Flesk falls a few feet after passing under the bridge, and does not appear beyond it.

a spacious valley. On continuing to ascend, a wider expanse of water opens to the view; and the actual form and limits of the lake are fully displayed in all their extent and magnificence.

To describe the varied combinations of picturesque beauties with which these shores abound, would be a vain attempt, where every step produces change, and every change delights. Let those who are earnestly bent upon a minute examination of the charming scenery of Killarney, freely range along the confines of the lake without the control of a guide, and endeavour to behold it under every possible point of view.

In this tract
How long soe'er the wanderer roves, each step
Shall wake fresh beauties; each short point present
A different picture, new, and yet the same.

It will generally be found advisable, however, in proceeding over these hills, to avoid ascending to such an elevation as discovers the full extent of the lake, and yet to keep sufficiently above the level of the water, to command a view of it above or between the intervening trees. From several positions on the hills, particularly from parts of the extensive deer-park belonging to Lord Kenmare, the prospect of the flat shore is effectually excluded by the hanging woods which grow on the slope beneath; and the woods of Mucruss on one side, and those about the

river Laune on the other, being seen emerging in the distance behind the trees which occupy the foreground, one might imagine that the shores of the lake were covered with a vast forest from end to end. From these positions, the situation of the town of Killarney is marked in the landscape by its smoke, and the church steeple just rising above the tops of the trees, and it has all the appearance of being romantically situated on the very margin of the lake.

The mountain prospects from this side of the lake vary materially from those which are commanded from the hills of Mucruss. At the latter place, owing to the nearness of the spectator, the great chain of mountains is beheld as it were in profile ; whilst here the eye, being removed to a convenient distance, and placed directly opposite to the line, is enabled to range along it for many miles. At Mucruss also the prospect is confined to the frontier mountains ; here, from the height of the situation, the tops of other mountains, which arise behind those of the great chain, are discovered gradually receding behind each other in wild variety. On arriving opposite to the defile between Turk and Glena, a very grand and picturesque view opens through it, of the mountains situated beyond the upper lake, which, in clear weather, and towards the close of day, is heightened by the contrast of light and shade that is then observable along the sides of the defile, and by the

strong illumination of the mountains in the distance. But in general it will be found that the views directly across the lake are much less picturesque than those which open to the right and left, when the eye is carried obliquely along the range of mountains. It will be found also, that the views to the right, towards Macarthy More's country, are far more picturesque than those to the left, looking over Mucruss, owing to the more graceful outline of the mountains, and to the greater variety of objects in the middle distance. The green hills which bound the domain of Mucruss obstruct the view at the base of the mountain on that side ; whilst, in the opposite direction, the eye commands, beyond the lake, the rich wooded vale watered by the river Laune, an extensive and variegated prospect ;

. . . . sweet interchange
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains ;
Now land, now sea, and shores with forests crown'd.

The charms of landscape are, in almost every instance, heightened by the glowing tints, and by the deep and lengthened shadows, which are diffused over the face of nature by the setting sun ; but the scenes of the lower lake of Killarney, especially those which are commanded from the hills, appear to so much greater advantage,

. . . . when many-colour'd evening
Sinks behind the purple woods and hills—

that the objects, which had been a source of delight in their sombre livery, can with difficulty be recognised for the same in the splendour of their new attire.

Until the sun has ascended to his meridian height, the mountains bordering upon the lower lake remain in shadow. Their surface then appears tame and unvaried, and their summit, if it be in clear weather, forms a hard outline against the azure sky; but as the day advances, the sun crosses the line of the great chain, and darts his rays on that side of the mountains which lies next to the lake. All their bold irregularities are then revealed; their protruding rocks; their deep glens; and the lake, illumined by the gleams which pass athwart its peaceful waves, appears resplendent amidst the dark and wooded islands.

. The horizontal clouds
 With purple dyes, and fissures edged with gold,
 Streak the calm ether, while through the sparkling haze
 The faint hills glimmer; fainter as their chains
 Approach the fount of brightness; fainter still
 Where sunk the parting orb, and with the sky
 In undistinguishable splendour join'd.

I have sometimes imagined that the sun set with more splendour at Killarney than in other parts of the country; and, indeed, there can be no doubt that the diversity of light and colours in the sky is augmented by the vast collections of clouds which

are attracted by the mountains, as they come from the Atlantic,

Or whirl'd tempestuous by the gusty wind,
Or silent born along, heavy and slow,
With the big stores of steaming Ocean charged.

These clouds not only occasion the most grand and beautiful effects at the approach of evening, but exhibit infinite vicissitudes of light and shade throughout the day, altering from hour to hour the face of the landscape.

Occasionally an effect is produced by the setting sun, on the range of mountains bounding the lake, not less beautiful than rare, and totally differing from what I remember to have seen in other mountainous countries ; though doubtless, in particular situations, the same appearance may result from the variations of the atmosphere. I can only attempt to give an idea of it by describing it as displaying the mountains in a transparent state, and suffused with a lively purple hue. Varying, however, from the ærial aspect of distant mountains, all the objects upon them, rocks, woods, and even houses, are distinctly visible, more so, indeed, than at noon day ; whilst, at the same time, their forms appear so unsubstantial, so ethereal, that one might almost fancy it possible to pass through them without resistance. I happened to be alone when I first witnessed this singular and beautiful phænomenon ; and having communicated it to

some friends who were with me at Killarney, we several times walked down to the lake when the state of the atmosphere seemed propitious ; but being frequently disappointed in our hopes of beholding it, my description began to pass for the mere creation of fancy : at last, however, the mountains put on this magical aspect, and incredulity instantly gave place to admiration and delight. This appearance is very transient, continuing only for about ten minutes, whilst the sun approaches the earth, and is sinking below the horizon. The mountains on which it is observable are Tomies, and those which lie next to it in the chain towards the west.

The hills which rise behind the flat not only command extensive and beautiful views of the lake, mountains, and the surrounding country, but in themselves possess many interesting features that cannot fail to gratify those who will be at the pains to examine them. In some parts, particularly in the extensive deer-park of Lord Kenmare, they are richly wooded with oaks, in others they are diversified with smooth knolls and green slopes, or broken by rocks ; and numerous rivulets descend along their sides to the lake. In the park there is a very romantic rocky glen, watered by a clear stream. Commodious walks at each side are cut amongst the rocks and trees, and rustic seats placed for the repose of the weary, or the contemplation of the enthusiast. Sometimes a strag-

gling deer, overleaping the fence, finds his way into this sequestered little spot, adding, by his wild aspect, to the picturesque effect of the scene, whether he is desried emerging from the thickets, or stooping to drink

Just in the dubious point, where, with the pool,
Is mixed the trembling stream, or where it boils
Around the stone.

The park commences at the distance of half a mile from the town, on the road leading to Castle island; and thence extends for some miles towards the south-east. The hill which it occupies, at the end next to the town, slopes gently towards the lake; but, at the opposite extremity, a range of lesser hills intervenes between it and the water, and intercepts the view. Towards Aghadoe the hills are less varied, but they command some beautiful prospects. There are several gentlemen's seats in this direction.

Of all the hills upon the northern side of the lake, the most elevated is that of Aghadoe, which appears to have been a place of no small celebrity in past ages. On its summit stand the remains of an abbey church or cathedral,* and it still continues to give title to a bishop. Amongst the Roman Catholics the

* In the view of the church of Mucruss abbey, the hill of Aghadoe, in the distance, may be distinguished by its ruins, which are conspicuous from every part of the lower lake.

diocese is preserved distinct ; but in the established church it ranks as a secondary one, attached to the see of Limerick. So imperfect, however, is the state of ecclesiastical records in Ireland, that of the history of this place, if the account of it in the *Monasticon Hibernicum* is to be credited, nothing more is known than what can be collected from the following extract from the *Annals of Innisfallen* :—“ Aodh son of Conor, son of Auliff More, O'Donoghue king of Eoganacht Loch-lein (the antient name of Killarney) died in the year 1231, and was buried in his old abbey of Aghadoe.” The writer of these annals was a monk of the abbey of Innisfallen, who flourished at a period when the members of these religious communities were prone to attach considerable importance to the antiquity of their establishments. The abbey of Innisfallen, to which he belonged, was founded as early as the sixth century, yet he emphatically styles this the *old* abbey of Aghadoe ; a circumstance from which it may not unfairly be inferred, that its foundation was at least coeval with, perhaps anterior to, that of Innisfallen.

Of the habitable part of the building no vestiges whatever remain ; but the walls of the church, on the south side alone excepted, are in tolerable preservation. The rudeness of the architecture, and the narrowness of the dimensions, do not indicate that the wealth or splendour of the church, in this part of

Ireland, was formerly very considerable. The whole length of the building is but eighty feet, the breadth twenty; and this small area is divided into two parts by a substantial wall without any apertures. The windows, few in number, and in form not unlike the loop-holes in an old castle, could only admit a faint glimmering light. Gloominess, once esteemed so favourable to devotion, and peculiarly congenial to the superstitious notions of monkery, appears to have been studied in the plans of the early churches of Ireland still more than in those of Great Britain. At Glendalough, in the county of Wicklow, there is a small church covered with a roof of stone of great antiquity, the interior of which is so dark that a book could with difficulty be read in it at noon day. Many others of the same description are to be met with.

The best executed part of this old building at Aghadoe is the western door-case, which consists of a carved Saxon arch, in excellent preservation; it differs only from that of the chapel of Innisfallen, represented in the vignette on the title-page, in being decorated with an embattled frieze, instead of one in chevron work. These door-cases are both remarkable for being formed of a red siliceous sandstone, interspersed with large grains of white quartz; a species of stone not found, I believe, in any part of the neighbourhood. Hence it is to be presumed that they were procured already carved, or sent perhaps as a

donation to the cathedral from some other part of the kingdom where the art of sculpture was further advanced. At least, this appears more probable than that the stone should have been conveyed in its rude state to the spot where it was to be finally employed ; for although it is capable of being wrought with more facility than either the common mountain stone, or the marble found on the shores of the lake, this advantage would not have compensated for the labour and expense of transporting it. Besides, the marble of this neighbourhood is so much more beautiful, as well as more durable, that an artist working on the spot must have given it the preference. Its superior hardness could scarcely have operated as an objection ; for, in an age when steel armour was in common use, there could have been no difficulty in procuring instruments capable of working it.

The hill of Aghadoe is regarded by the inhabitants of the surrounding district as a spot of peculiar sanctity ; and the cemetery adjoining the church, like that at Mucruss abbey, continues to be a favourite place of burial. Though the soil is considerably deeper here than at the latter place, the eye is nevertheless assailed with a similar disagreeable spectacle of mouldering bones and coffins, that have been dug up in opening new graves. Well may it be described, in the language of the poet,—

. a place of tombs,
 Waste, desolate, where Ruin dreary dwells,
 Brooding o'er sightless skulls and crumbling bones;
 Ghastful he sits, and eyes with steadfast glare,
 Sad trophies of his power, where ivy twines
 Its fatal green around the falling roof;
 The time-shook arch; the column grey with moss;
 The leaning wall; the sculptured stone defaced,
 Whose monumental flattery, mix't with dust,
 Now hides the name it vainly meant to raise.

A striking instance is exhibited at this place of a superstitious prejudice, which I apprehend is observable amongst persons even of a more enlightened religious profession. Not a single grave appears to the north of the cathedral, whilst, on the opposite side, they extend to a considerable distance beyond the precincts of the ancient cemetery, along the green borders of the public road; but doubtless the ground has received benediction, or the unhallowed spot would be avoided with caution. How various and inconsistent are the opinions of mankind on the subject of burial! Here would it be deemed a dereliction of duty to inter the deceased in any place but that which has already received their forefathers; though so many lay claim to the same scanty portion of earth, that time is scarcely allowed for changing dust to dust; though the grave is liable to be dispossessed of its dead, and the ashes of those who were once held dear scattered before the winds of heaven. How much more rational the custom of America and

Switzerland, where a spot is commonly selected for burial in a private garden, or in some place distinguished for its amenity and retirement: surely it must be grateful to the heart, in the hour of sorrow, to be enabled to visit the tomb of a beloved friend in silence and in solitude, free from impertinent intrusion, free even from the unwelcome appearance of a stranger.*

In the north-west corner of the church of Aghadoe, there is a stone about seven feet in length, on which Mr Pelham, not long since, discovered traces of what are supposed to have been the Ogham, or sacred mystical characters used by the ancient pagan Irish priesthood. This species of writing, if writing indeed it is, may be ranked amongst the most simple, and probably the most imperfect, of the various kinds which have been transmitted to the knowledge of modern times; in fact, it differs but little from the scores or marks which illiterate people commonly make with a piece of chalk for the purpose of enumeration. Yet upon these rude strokes time has affixed a value which is enhanced by the accounts that

* Du bon Helvetien qui ne connoit pas l'usage ?
 Pres d'un eau murmurante, au fond d'un vert bocage,
 Il place les tombeaux ; il les couvre des fleurs ;
 Par leur douce culture, il charme ses douleurs ;
 Et pense respirer, quand sa main les arrose,
 L'âme de son ami, dans le parfum d'une rose.

have been handed down of their mysterious import. “Notwithstanding frequent mention is made,” says General Vallancey, “in Irish manuscripts, of the use of the Ogham character, and of certain monuments in certain places, the incredulity of our modern antiquaries was so great as to deny its existence, until a person was paid by the late Mr Conyngham to search upon a mountain, in the county of Clare, for one of these monuments mentioned in an ancient poem. The monument and inscription were at length discovered, and published in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy. After the discovery of this monument, no Ogham inscriptions were heard of, until Mr Pelham discovered fourteen of them, on as many different stones, in the county of Kerry.” Of these stones and inscriptions, accurate engravings, together with an account of their discovery, may be seen in *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*. The stone of Aghadoc is amongst the number. Mr Pelham is of opinion that it was once much longer, and stood erect, as at one end it bears marks of having been broken, and seems to have been thrown down by violence into its present situation. He thinks also that the inscription is imperfect, as there is an appearance of a scale of the stone having come off at the present termination. The characters, near the middle of the stone, are three and a half inches long.

The ancient Irish erected pillars of stone on many

occasions : “ Some were inscribed (says General Vallancey*) with Ogham characters, to mark the cycles ;† others were Phalli, such as we are told the brahmins erected on the boundaries of districts, on the high ways, and in the temples, as symbols of the vivifying spirit.” At Ballysteeny, in Kerry, Mr Pelham discovered a prepared rounded stone, tapering towards the top, with an Ogham inscription, which the general, without hesitation, pronounces to be the Muidhr, Phallus, or Lingam of the Hindoos. This stone appears to have been originally about eight feet in length, and to have been broken by a fire that was made against it : part of it still continues in an upright position.

A few yards from the western end of the church of Aghadoe, the remains are to be seen of one of those slender round towers, whose original destination, notwithstanding the laboured and ingenious researches of the numerous antiquarians who have directed their attention to the subject, is still involved in almost impenetrable obscurity. Sixty-four of these fabrics have been discovered in different parts of Ireland, of various heights, the tallest measuring no less

* Coll. de Reb. Hib. vol. vi. page 176.

† As the Ogham character was a mysterious one, whose import was known only to the priesthood, and which no person at the present day pretends to decypher, it seems somewhat bold to assert that they marked the cycles.

than one hundred and thirty-seven feet : their diameters are from twelve to nineteen, and the thickness of the walls, in general, between three and four feet ; when the height of the tower is unusually great, it increases to a few inches more. Many of them are built of hewn stone, and those that remain entire are crowned with a conical cap of the same materials. The entrance is by a small door, generally situated considerably above the foundation ; in some instances at the apparently inconvenient height of twenty-four feet : but at Swords, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, and at Cluanmacnose, in the King's county, there are towers which have the entrance on a level with the ground. Various small apertures are observable at different elevations above the doors, and at different sides of the building, which were probably made for the purpose of affording light to the stories into which the tower was divided, or to the stairs or flights of steps which conducted to the upper apartment. The latter was lighted by four large windows placed opposite to the cardinal points. Some persons, however, notwithstanding these appearances, contend that they were never divided into stories, but always left open from top to bottom, as they are at present.

At a distance, several of these towers have the appearance of colossal pillars, and in certain positions they produce a most striking effect. Were I to single

out any one as more particularly calculated to impress the mind of a person who beholds it for the first time, it would be that at Glendalough, *the Glen of the two lakes*, in the county of Wicklow. This tower is situated near the ruins of some old churches, on the banks of a lake, in a deep and solitary valley, surrounded by lofty mountains. The prospect of it opens very suddenly at a bend of the road ; and if a stranger has not been prepared for the sight by a previous description, he may be almost tempted to believe that what he sees is the illusion of his fancy, so extraordinary does it appear to meet with a stately column in such a wild and desolate situation. The tower of Aghadoe was constructed with hewn stone ; but, exposed during the lapse of ages, on the summit of a lofty hill, to the influence of the elements, it has yielded to the shocks of time, and at present is in a very perishable state. Its shattered remains are not more than fifteen feet in height.

In different parts of the work entitled *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, and in Dr Ledwich's *Essays on the Antiquities of Ireland*, a minute description may be found of these towers, together with disquisitions on the probable purpose for which they were erected. Various opinions have been entertained on this subject, and each one has been warmly defended. It has been severally supposed that they were employed as beacons or watch-towers ; as places of punishment

for those who had sinned against the ordinances of the early Christian church ; as the habitations of the anchorite monks, called Pillar Saints ; as stations from which the priest, by his voice, or the sound of some instrument, summoned the people to prayer ; or, which is the opinion most generally received, as belfries. To mention the numerous arguments which have been adduced in support of each of these suppositions, would be alike tedious and unnecessary, since common observation is sufficient to refute most of them.

It is evident, for instance, that lofty towers, intended only for the communication of signals, would neither have been erected at the bottom of deep valleys, nor on the summit of very high hills : in the one position they would have been concealed by the surrounding heights, in the other, their additional elevation could have contributed but little to the purpose of the institution.

Equally inconsistent is it with probability to imagine they were designed as places of punishment ; where the criminal, contrary to all analogy, contrary to the usage of every nation both ancient and modern, was exalted to the most airy and agreeable apartment of the prison, instead of being precipitated into the depths of a dungeon. Their contracted dimension, moreover, militates very strongly against this supposition.

When the mind of man falls a prey to fanaticism, his notions become so absurd, and his practices so extravagant and capricious, that we read, without surprise, in the early history of the church, of ascetics who fixed their abode on the summit of lofty pillars; but the pillar on which Simon Stylites performed the extraordinary penances which gave celebrity to his name was not hollow; it is distinctly stated that he stood on a small platform, on the summit, exposed to the weather, the vicissitudes and severity of which he patiently endured for thirty years.* His imitators, who obtained the name of pillar saints, in relaxing their penances, might have provided some sort of shelter, but there is no positive testimony to the fact; and it seems highly improbable that edifices, so costly as these towers, should have been erected for the mere purpose of enabling a solitary fanatic to realize his wild projects of self-mortification.

Dr Ledwich himself appears quite satisfied that the towers were erected for belfries; and, in support of this opinion, he states that they are always found in the vicinity of churches, and generally next to that end which was afterwards allotted to the steeple;—that in many instances, in Ireland as well as Great Britain, the steeple stood apart;—and that, after it became the practice to unite it with the church, the

* Gibbon, chap. 37.

round towers were connected in the same manner as square steeples,—examples of which are to be seen in two of the ruined churches at Glendalough. Now, as to these round steeples, they are certainly built very like the solitary towers, and are similarly terminated with a conical stone cap ; but their circumference is much more contracted,—their height inconsiderable,—they are erected on a single broad arch, and, to me, evidently appear an imitation of the ancient fabrics.

It cannot admit of a doubt, however, that many of these towers were at some period used as belfries ; but, taking this for granted, it by no means follows that they were originally constructed for that purpose. If so, why should the doors have been placed at such an inconvenient height as to render the assistance of a long ladder necessary to get into them ? This one question appears to carry with it insuperable objections to the supposition of their being built expressly for belfries ; but if, at the time when large bells were first introduced into Ireland, the towers had been standing, it is very probable that the inhabitants would have employed them for that purpose, instead of building such square steeples as were common in the neighbouring countries.

In the midst of these difficulties, the conjecture of General Vallancey, the ingenious editor of *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, offers itself to our notice ;

and though, in common with the preceding theories, it is liable to several objections, and cannot be considered as absolutely conclusive, yet it appears to me to be entitled to a far more respectful attention than any one which has been hitherto advanced. After having been at considerable pains to prove the early establishment of an oriental colony in Ireland, from the conformity of its language* and the resemblance of its mythology to those of countries in the east, he concludes that these towers were built for the display of the sacred fires, which were kept burning in honour of the pagan deities. “The pagan Irish,” says he, “worshipped Crom Cruait, the same god Zoroaster adored in fire, first on mountain tops, then in

* I had not been a week landed in Ireland from Gibraltar, where I had studied Hebrew and Chaldaic, under Jews of various countries and denominations, when I heard a peasant girl say to a boor standing by, “*Feach an maddinag.*” Behold the morning star: the maddinag of the Chaldeans.— מרכה נג Maiddinag, the morning star (Shaw.)

Shortly afterwards, being benighted with a party, in the mountains of the western parts of the county of Cork, we lost the path, when an aged cottager undertook to be our guide. It was a fine starry night. In our way, the peasant, pointing to the constellation Orion, said, that was *Caomai*, or the armed king, and he described the three upright stars to be his spear or sceptre, and the three horizontal stars to be his sword-belt. I could not doubt their being the Cimah of Job, which the learned Costard asserts to be the constellation Orion. כמה *Caqmai*, an armed man (Shaw.) Arabic, *Kami*, armed. The reader, from this circumstance, may judge with what eagerness I was impelled to study the Irish language.—*Collect. de Reb. Hib.* vol. VI. p. 315.

caves, and afterwards in towers.* He adds the following passage from Prideaux :—“ ‘The Persians first made the lioly fires on the tops of hills ; but Zoroaster, finding that these fires in the open air were often extinguished by rain, tempests, or storms, directed that fire-towers should be built, that they might the better be preserved.’ ” It is scarcely possible to conceive buildings more suitable for the purpose than the Irish round towers ; and if any mystery had been observed in supplying them with fuel, which may be readily imagined, the elevated position of the door was well calculated to exclude the prying eye of curiosity, and conceal what was doing within.

The following observation of General Vallancey upon Mr Pelham’s account of the Ogham inscription, is entitled to peculiar attention : “ *Agh*, signifies *fire*, and also the word *doigh*, pronounced *doe*. I think there must have formerly been here either a fire-tower, or an altar, dedicated to the fire of fires—the sun.”† The commanding and conspicuous situation of the hill of Aghadoe would have justly entitled it to that

* Collect. de Reb. Hib. vol. VI. page 122.

† I have every reason to believe that General Vallancey was totally unacquainted with the circumstance of the remains of a round tower being still visible at Aghadoe, until I had the pleasure of informing him of it, some time after his remarks on the Ogham inscription were published. Aghadoe is mentioned in some lists of the places where towers stood, and omitted in others : It was very possible, therefore, that it might have escaped his notice.

name, had a sacred fire been maintained on its summit.

The arguments which have been adduced to prove that no stone buildings but such as were of the most humble and rude description, existed in Ireland before the arrival of the Danes, and that these towers must therefore have been erected subsequent to that period, appear far from conclusive. That the Irish, at a very remote period, were in possession of the secret of smelting and working various metals, is unquestionable;* and it may well be supposed, that the same people who made them acquainted with these important and valuable arts, also instructed them in that of masonry, though they might never have availed themselves of their knowledge, excepting in the construction of the sacred towers. We are told of many large cities in the east where no buildings are allowed of stone or brick but those which are appropriated to the chief magistracy, or set apart for the uses of religion: and in countries which abound with wood, as Ireland did formerly, and America does now, buildings of that material are commonly preferred for the purposes of domestic life, on account of their cheapness and their supposed warmth. To infer from that

* See the many descriptions in Coll. de Reb. Hib. of rings of gold, anklets, crowns, &c.; and particularly of the instruments found in the bog of Cullen, under two successive strata of bog, trees and earth,

passage of Bede, wherein he relates that the cathedral of Lindisfarne, or Holy island, was built in the year 652, *more Scotorum*, after the manner of the Scots or Irish, with wood, and covered with reeds,—that none but wooden buildings were known in Ireland at that period, is as absurd as it would be to conclude that no stone buildings are now to be found in America, because a house has been erected in England after the American manner, with logs of wood, and covered with shingles.

As to the remark, that these round towers are always situated near churches, it might be stated, conversely, perhaps with as much propriety, that the churches are built contiguous to the towers. It is well known that the early Christian missionaries were content, in many instances, to accommodate their worship to that of their pagan proselytes ; either because it was impracticable to eradicate every trace of idolatry, or because they found by experience that the great work of conversion was likely to be more effectually promoted by yielding, in some degree, to habitual prejudice, than by insisting on a total dereliction of opinions supported by the sanction of ages. Hence many of the heathen temples, and places consecrated to their gods, were eagerly appropriated to Christian worship. Enthusiasm was kept alive by indulging a veneration for objects which had been long held sacred ; and the people were gradually induced

to transfer their adoration to the true Deity. In Ireland, it may be presumed that churches were erected in the vicinity of the fire-towers, in the places dedicated to the sun ; and, when a suitable occasion offered, by the introduction of bells, for rendering these stately relics of the ancient superstition subservient to the uses of Christian worship, it would gladly have been seized,—just as the statue of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome, a key having been substituted for the thunder-bolt, and a glory added to the head, was brought forward to the superstitious multitude, as an exact representation of the holy apostle Saint Peter.

Sir Richard Colt Hoare, whose authority I adduce with deference, inclines to the opinion of these towers being Christian edifices, and built about the ninth century ;* and he thinks that the figure of Christ upon the cross, sculptured upon the key stone over the door of the tower at Denoughmore, decidedly proves that they were not of pagan origin. But might not this stone have been sculptured after it was placed in the wall ? And even admitting that some of the towers were built in Christian times, it by no means follows that none of them were erected previous to that period. The round steeples attached to the stone-roofed churches at Glendalough, appear to me to be of a date posterior to that of some of the

* Tour in Ireland. Round Towers.

solitary towers ; and if the form was so much admired as to be used for steeples in these instances, it seems by no means improbable that single towers of greater height and superior workmanship to the original structures might have been built at a subsequent æra.

The earliest writer who takes notice of these singular edifices is Giraldus Cambrensis, who wrote about the year 1185. He expressly calls them *ecclesiastical towers* ; and Dr Ledwich* endeavours to prove, from the grammatical construction of the passage, that Giraldus might have seen the Irish in the very act of building them. “ It was a singular and striking spectacle,” says Dr Ledwich, “ for our author to behold so great a number of these towers dispersed over the country, all of the same figure and fashion, contiguous to wooden churches, and supporting bells to summon the vicinity to religious duties, or to warn them of approaching danger. Surely it must be esteemed a gross perversion of common sense, to extract from Cambrensis’ plain words any other meaning than that now given. He was fully competent to deliver a simple fact ; nor did the objects he was describing require the microscopic eyes of some modern antiquarians.” Now Giraldus says not one word either of wooden churches or of bells, or of religious

* Essays on Irish Antiquities.

duties, or of dangers ; and whoever will read the original passage, must be persuaded that Dr Ledwich has indulged his fancy to no small extent upon this occasion. It occurs in his chapter *concerning a great lake which had a wonderful origin*,* wherein a marvellous traditional story is related of a very wicked race of people having been swept away by a flood, and the country which they inhabited converted into a lake, (at present known by the name of Lough

* Topographia Hibern. 2 lib. cap. ix.

Est lacus in ultonia miræ magnitudinis triginta mill. pass. in longum et quindecim in latum habens. Ex quo eximiæ pulchritudinis qui et Banna vocatur fluvius erumpit, et in Borealem oceanum se transfundit.——Huic vero lacui, mirabiles ut aiunt casus initium dedit. Fuit in terra illa, quam nunc lacus obtinet, gens ab antiquissimis temporibus, vitiosissima.——Fuerat autem in ore populi, verbum celebre, quod quam cito fons quidam terræ illius (qui ex reverentia de barbara superstitione sibi exhibita operculum habebat et signaculum) discopertus relinqueretur, tanta statim inundatione fons exuberaret, ut litam provinciam illam et gentem simul diluerat et deleret.

Contiget autem aliquando mulierculam quandam hauriendi causa ad fontem accessisse quæ, vaso impleto, nec dum fonte signato ad parvulam suam, quem tamen non procul inde positum plorantem, audivit, commota mater ejus cujus occurrit, et quia vox populi vox Dei maturans reditum tanta scaturigine fontem exuberantem offendit, ut et ipsam statim cum puero totamque gentem illam et pecora tanquam diluvio quodam particulari seu provinciali in hora submergit. Cumque totam terræ illius faciem aquarum jam velaret ubertas stabilis permanens stagnum fecit.——

Hujus autem eventus argumentum est non improbabile, quod pisces aquæ illius turres ecclesiasticas quæ more patriæ arctæ sunt et altæ nec non et rotundæ sub undis manifeste sereno tempore conspiciunt ; et extraneis transeuntibus rei quæ causas admirantibus frequenter ostendunt.

Neagh :) “ And this story,” says Giraldus, “ seems not improbable, because the fishermen of that lake, in serene weather, can distinctly see, beneath the water, ecclesiastical towers, which, after the manner of the country, are built round, lofty, and narrow ; and they frequently point them out to strangers when crossing the lake, who wonder at the cause of this circumstance.”

The obvious inference from this passage is, that even in the days of Giraldus these towers were considered as objects of great antiquity, and not that he saw them building : had they been all notoriously of recent construction, the argument drawn in favour of the truth of the tradition, from the supposed appearance of towers at the bottom of the lake, would have been absurd.

At whatever period these extraordinary fabrics were erected, the question is still extremely interesting, whether the plan was of original Irish or of foreign invention. No traces of such works have been discovered, it is said, in any other part of Europe, excepting in two instances in Scotland, in the counties of Angus and of Murray ; and these towers differ in several respects from the Irish ones. The conjecture that they are of eastern origin, has received a very strong corroboration of late from the testimony of Lord Valentia, published in his *Travels through India*. In describing the town of Bhaugulpore, his

lordship says,—“ I was much pleased with the sight of two very singular round towers about a mile north-west of the town. They much resemble those buildings in Ireland which have hitherto puzzled the antiquaries of the sister kingdom, excepting that they are more ornamented. It is singular that there is no tradition concerning them, nor are they held in any respect by the Hindoos of this country. The Rajah of Jyenaghur considers them as holy, and has erected a small building to shelter the great number of his subjects who annually come to worship.” A view of these towers, by Mr Salt, is given in his lordship’s *Travels*; the resemblance to those of Ireland in the elevated position of the door, the stone roof, and the four large windows at the summit, is very remarkable.

At a short distance from the cathedral of Aghadoe, towards the south-west, the ruins of a second tower, very different, however, from the former one, are observable. The country people give it the name of the pulpit; but from what cause I could not learn. From being situated in the centre of a square area, defended by a ditch and rampart, it appears to have been once a place of strength. At two of the sides the ramparts are doubled, and there are traces of bastions at the angles. The height of the tower is about thirty feet; its diameter twenty-one feet; and the thickness of the walls at the base seven feet. It was divided into three stories, in the first of which

there was a fire-place ; the chimney belonging to it is carried up through the battlements, and is still entire. There was also a large window in this story opening to the south, and two small ones in opposite directions. The door-case is much dilapidated. To the left of it, between a double wall, appears a staircase which conducts to the first story ; beyond that, the ascent was continued by a flight of stones, fastened at one end into the wall, a few only of which now remain.

There are some other remains of the works of ancient times on the hills that arise behind the flat, which contribute to show that this neighbourhood was formerly much distinguished. They should on no account be left unnoticed, as the beauty of the surrounding scenery will amply compensate those who do not derive gratification from examining mere antiquities. The most remarkable of these remains is a circle formed of seven large stones, placed in the ground in an upright position, and enclosed within a circular mound of earth. The inner circle is fourteen feet in diameter ; the outer one seventy-two. Sixty feet from the latter, towards the south, two large upright stones appear, very near each other ; the tallest of which is about eleven feet in height, measuring from the surface of the ground, and eighteen in circumference : they lie nearly east and west, the larger one being towards the east.

The similarity of this circle, and the still more striking similarity of several larger circles, that have been discovered in other parts of Ireland, to some of the druidical remains in the isle of Anglesea, afford strong grounds for believing that they were constructed by the same order of men.* But notwithstanding this circumstance, as well as the exact resemblance of the *cromlechs* in Ireland to those found in Anglesea, which are generally admitted to be the work of the druids, it is maintained by several writers on Irish antiquities, that the druids were unknown in Ireland; and these stone circles are attributed to the votaries of Budth, the Phœbus or Apollo of the Irish, who, like Vishnou, the Apollo of the brahmins, is supposed to have undergone nine incarnations: hence the nine stones of which the circles are found most commonly to be composed. The number in other instances is supposed to have been indicative of the cycles, or emblematical of the heavenly bodies. In this temple the two larger stones might have represented the sun and moon, which were both objects of adoration; and the seven smaller stones in the circle, the remainder of the planetary system. By others, however, it is asserted that these circles

* Bryn Gwyn, or the druids' church, in the isle of Anglesea, consisted of a circle fifty-two yards in diameter, formed of stones four feet high; and at a short distance from the circle stood two upright stones twelve feet high.

were not formed for religious purposes, but were places set apart for the inauguration of the ancient kings of the country, or for the promulgation of the laws : and these contradictory opinions are alike defended with pertinacity, although unsupported by testimony. We may, on these occasions, indulge conjectures amusing to the theorist ; but I fear we can form no conclusion likely to be at all beneficial to the historian.

This circle stands in the corner of a field, at the distance of somewhat less than half a mile from the turnpike, on the Cork road. I came to it by accident, and I could not learn that it had attracted the notice of any of the neighbouring inhabitants. It may readily be found by ascending the wooded heights bordering upon the river on the left hand, immediately after passing the broken bridge near the turnpike.

On the hills to the east of the river Flesk, two fortifications of remote antiquity also claim attention. They are situated on that side of the river which lies nearest to Castle lough, and may be readily approached by following the road which commences near the bridge. The first of them is of a circular form, in diameter about thirty yards, surrounded with a fosse and rampart. On the south side of the area there is an oblong pit faced with stone, at the bottom of each end of which a small hole, scarcely sufficient to admit a man on his hands and knees, is observable. I was informed, by the proprietor of the place, that

these holes are the entrances of very extensive subterranean passages, into which people have proceeded a considerable distance with lights; but at present the way is choked with rubbish. In some respects this fort resembles the raths, or Danish forts, so common in every part of Ireland; but it is neither so much elevated by art as they are, nor is it placed in such a commanding natural situation.

The second one is about a quarter of a mile distant; it may be enumerated amongst

Our forts on steepy hills, that, far below,
See wanton streams in winding valleys flow.

It very much resembles those of Roman construction which are commonly seen in England, and consists of a square of about forty yards, whose sides nearly correspond with the cardinal points; the ramparts and ditch are tolerably perfect. Here the river Flesk may be traced in all its windings through a valley ten miles in length, up to the hill on which the fort stands; at the base of which it makes a bold sweep, and, after passing a bridge of nineteen arches, is seen at a distance gliding peaceably into the lake.

This fort seems to have been erected for the protection of the entrance into the valley, which there is reason to believe, from the ruined castles observable in different parts of it, was formerly a pass of

great consequence : it is said that the road from Killarney to Cork once passed through it.

Amidst the varied prospects which these hills afford, that from the summit of Aghadoe has been pointed out by Dr Smith, in his History of Kerry, as one of the most beautiful, and subsequent writers have been content to follow his description. From this position there is, indeed, a very distinct view of the limits of the lake ; but, instead of a fine picture, the spectator is presented as it were with a map of the country : the picturesque beauty of the scenery vanishes before you ascend one third of the hill.

The most pleasing views from Aghadoe are found in the vicinity of a road which runs along its base at a short distance from the lake, leading from the town of Killarney to the river Laune. As for the hill itself, occupied by small fields divided by stone fences and banks of arid earth, without a tree, and almost without a bush for miles, it affords nothing interesting in a picturesque point of view. The bleakness of this tract is, however, forgotten in a great measure, whilst the eye is engaged in examining the distant landscape ; and even if it should be observed and should offend, like discords that are introduced in music to increase the sweetness of the returning harmony, it will serve to give additional value to the wooded scenes which appear once more on the banks of the river Laune. Here Grenagh, the seat of Ma-

jor Bland, situated on the near bank of the river, at the head of a sloping lawn adorned by numerous fine trees, and commanding an extensive view of the lake towards Mucruss, attracts the attention ; and, on the opposite side, Dunloh castle and the country around it will amply repay those who take delight in rural variety for the pains of crossing the river at the bridge, which lies about half a mile lower down the stream.

Dunloh castle seems to have been erected for the double purpose of guarding the river and a defile in the great chain of mountains. It stands on the summit of a small conical hill, whose apex has been cut down to afford a more convenient space for the building ; and from its position it must, before the use of artillery, have been a place of great strength. In the wars of the Earl of Desmond, during the reigns of Henry the Eighth and Queen Elizabeth, it suffered considerably ; but it was rebuilt about the period of Sir George Carew's administration in Munster. In after times, when the parliamentary forces came into this country, it was again attacked, and a great part of it demolished by a bombardment. A solitary square tower, which originally constituted but a small proportion of the fabric, still remains entire, and has been converted into a dwelling-house, ingeniously planned, which affords more room and convenience than could be expected from the exterior aspect. This castle is the property of Major Mahony. The

hill on which it stands is thickly covered with trees, so that no part of the lake, or of the surrounding country, is seen from the area or platform in front of the castle, and a very confined view alone opens from its windows ; but from its battlements there is a full prospect of the lake, and of the river Laune in all its windings. The view of this place, taken from the banks of the river, discovers, in the distance, the defile already mentioned, known by the name of Dunlooh gap.

Amidst the vast mountainous region on the western side of the county of Kerry, there is no scene which exhibits a more varied and sublime combination of the boldest features of uncultivated nature than the gap of Dunlooh. By some terrific and mighty operation, the chain of mountains at this place seems to have been abruptly severed, and the stupendous rocks of which it was formed, rent asunder, and dispersed in wild disorder through the chasm. On the brow of the mountain which guards the entrance on the right hand, immense projecting masses of stone, suspended in their lofty beds, overhang the pass, threatening destruction to all who approach this savage solitude ; and the vast fractured stones which are observable at the base of the cliff, plainly indicate that the danger has not always been imaginary. One almost shudders at thinking of the horrible crash which must have been produced by these ponderous stones,



Tumbling all precipitate down dashed,
Rattling around, loud thundering to the moon,

whilst the echoes, in the still retirement, repeated the tremendous sound through the windings of the vale.

A clear stream at the bottom of the defile winds amongst the rocks,

———— now rapid, and now slow ;
Now murmuring soft, now roaring in cascades.

This stream forms a communication between a chain of small lakes, some of which are very deep, but others seem only to be a dilatation of the stream, where it has been obstructed in its course, by the accumulated ruins of the impending precipice.

To open a communication between the country in the vicinity of the river Laune and that bordering upon Kenmare river, a road has lately been cut through this defile, under the direction of Major Mahony ; in the conduct of which he has shown great taste and judgment. In some places it passes along the edge of precipices where the way has been with great difficulty cut through the solid stone ; in others, between immense detached rocks which have fallen from the mountain, and which are just sufficiently separated from each other to admit a single carriage, thus affording a natural passage that could not have been opened elsewhere without prodigious labour and expense. Where the obstacles on one

side of the defile could not be surmounted, the road has been carried to the other, traversing the stream over bridges of solid construction and not inelegant form. One of these, situated at the head of a cascade, and resting at each end on a single stone, has a most romantic appearance. The length of the defile is three miles ; and at the termination of it a view is discovered of the upper lake, which may be readily approached on foot in this direction. The new road is not yet adapted to carriages, owing to the narrowness of the passes in some places, and the steepness and ruggedness of the rocks in others : it was made chiefly for the use of the mountaineers, who invariably transport their butter and other articles of rural commerce on horses. Great advantages can already be perceived from opening this communication ; and when the country becomes richer, and can sustain the additional expense, it is intended to widen the road, and to render it commodious in every respect.

No very striking features distinguish the tract which lies between Dunlooh castle and the mountains, on the border of the lake ; it is divided for the most part into fields, and there are few trees, except what grow in the hedge-rows. The rising grounds, indeed, command prospects of the lake ; but they are very much inferior to those which open from Mucruss on the opposite shore.

The ancient family seat of Macarthy-*more*, or the great, stood here ; and its remains may still be seen near a small grove not far from the water side. This chief, to acquire a more secure title to his extensive possessions, in those times of anarchy and confiscation, surrendered them to Queen Elizabeth, who immediately afterwards re-conveyed them to him by letters patent, and created him Earl of Glencar.

To the south of Dunloh castle there are no roads, except such narrow passes as are made for the convenience of the farmers who live at the foot of the mountains ; but a good walker might proceed along the mountain-shore, and entirely round the three lakes, unless when the rivers are swollen by rains ; at which time many of them are impassable. This route however is full of difficulties, and should on no account be attempted by any but the vigorous and active ; for a whole day is scarcely sufficient to accomplish it, and woe to the benighted wanderer in this wild and uninhabited district !

SECTION II.

HAVING thus taken a survey of the shores of the lower lake, from Mucruss, at the foot of Turk mountain, to the gap of Dunloh, and pointed out those objects which appeared to me best deserving of notice, I shall next endeavour to direct the attention to those parts of the scenery which are seen to most advantage in the course of an excursion on the water.

The common place of embarkation for strangers who sojourn in the town is at the head of Ross bay, at a quay under the walls of the castle, this being the nearest part of the lake to which there is a communication by a carriage road. Persons who prefer walking will, however, find a much more agreeable route than the high road, and not much longer, through Lord Kenmare's grounds, along the banks of the river Deanagh ; but the propriety of taking boat near the mouth of this river depends upon the course that it is intended afterwards to pursue, upon the state of the wind, and also upon that of the lake ; for, in dry weather, the water is sometimes so low as not to ad-

mit a boat to approach within many yards of the shore.

From the town to the castle of Ross the distance is about an English mile and a half. The road runs along a flat, and, as it affords little to gratify the eye of one who is anticipating the pleasures of arriving at the lake, it invariably appears tedious and uninteresting. Indeed few strangers visit Killarney without having occasion to lament that there is no public place of accommodation in the immediate vicinity of the lake. Much time is always lost in passing and repassing this road, and considerable inconvenience is often experienced in getting back to the town at night, after the fatigues of a day spent upon the water. Horses, carriages, and attendants, that wait the precarious return of a party, are sometimes necessarily detained many hours, during which they are commonly obliged to remain on the open beach exposed to all the casualties of this uncertain climate. If a spacious and well-regulated inn were established on the borders of the lake, and there are many excellent situations for one, it could not fail to remunerate the proprietor.

Strangers are very liberally accommodated with the use of Lord Kenmare's boats, which are handsome and commodious. To the superintendant of them, who either acts himself, or substitutes a person properly qualified, as guide, a small gratuity is given :

the boatmen have an established hire of one English shilling each, if they are not ordered beyond the limits of the lower lake ; if they go further, they receive half as much more. It is usual to allow them refreshments if they are kept out the whole day ; an indulgence that is too frequently abused by their drinking to excess, to which they are addicted, in common with most of their countrymen in the same rank of life. When any of them unfortunately become intoxicated, and no precaution will always be effectual to preserve sobriety, disorder seldom fails to ensue, attended at least with inconvenience, and sometimes even with danger, to the party. In this, as in most other mountainous regions, storms are frequent ; and when the lake is exposed to their fury, its waves become so boisterous that skill and strength are requisite to resist their impetuosity. To those who are accustomed to behold the billows of the ocean, the danger arising from the waves upon a basin of water not more than six miles in extent may be regarded perhaps with contempt ; but the lower lake sometimes presents the most frightful images of elemental warfare.

A gentleman living near Killarney, who had often crossed the ocean, assured me he had more than once beheld it so much agitated by the hurricanes which descend in circling eddies through the passes between the mountains, that the waves, drifted together, and

raised to an immense height above the surface, assumed the terrific aspect of a water-spout. Though such tremendous storms are seldom experienced in summer, yet, as squalls occur even during that season, no boats should be used that are not able to encounter heavy waves. For the same reason, vessels with sails cannot be employed without the greatest care : those belonging to Lord Kenmare are all conducted with oars. The boatmen, in general, when sober, are very prudent ; and as, from long experience, they are well acquainted with the prognostics of bad weather, their judgment and management may be safely relied on.

The navigation of the lake is represented as unsafe to those who are unacquainted with the rocks ; but the peril in this respect is somewhat exaggerated. The greatest danger to be apprehended from rocks is when the lake either rises considerably above, or sinks below, its ordinary level. In the former case, those rocks which commonly appear above water are covered, but not sufficiently deep to admit the passage of a large boat over them ; and they are so numerous, that it is almost impossible to remember the precise situation of each. I have many times been carried against them by boatmen of reputed experience. Similar accidents happen when the lake is unusually low. In the summer of the year 1803, the water, from a long continuance of dry weather, sunk

so much, that a great many rocks were laid bare which had never been seen before that period. A large sail boat, belonging to a gentleman residing near the lake, navigated by men who were supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with every dangerous point, was very nearly lost during this season, by getting entangled in a reef of rocks near the Brown island, over which there usually was found a sufficient depth of water ; and it was not extricated without very great difficulty and danger. If, however, we contrast the infrequency of untoward accidents with the great concourse of people who venture on the lake, at all seasons of the year, and if we reflect that giddiness is the usual concomitant of festivity, we may conclude that the navigation is almost exempt from danger.

On approaching the lake in the vicinity of Ross castle, some disappointment is at first generally experienced from the flatness and marshiness of the shore. The latter part of the road is a mere causeway over a morass or bog near the castle, which is reduced to a narrow isthmus by inlets of the lake on each side. A small canal through this isthmus, which just admits one boat, is the only separation between the main land and the island during summer ; but in winter the whole isthmus is overflowed.

The canal affords a ready passage from Ross bay to Mucruss ; and it also facilitates that to the upper



lake when the wind blows fresh into the bay, at which time the boats could with difficulty be rowed round the northern point of the island. A small bridge is built across the canal, at the foot of which there is a large gate, with a guard-house for the protection of the approach to the castle : when the castle is garrisoned, this gate is regularly closed at night, and sentinels placed over it.

Ross castle is built on a rock close to the water. The only remains of the old works are a large quadrangular tower, which is still perfect, with two small circular flankers in a ruined state. Adjoining the former, a barrack has been erected for two hundred soldiers, which, together with apartments for officers of the castle, stores, stables, &c., give the place an aspect of importance. The castle forms a conspicuous feature in the landscape from almost every part of the lower lake ; but the regularity of the modern additions is destructive of the picturesque effect of the ancient fabric. The view of it is taken from Reen point, near the mouth of the bay of Ross. The guard-house is distinguishable at a short distance, to the left of the castle, on the low plashy ground ; and beyond it is seen a part of the lake, with the distant shore and low hills of Mucruss. The pointed mountain is Tusk, at the foot of which lies the middle, or Tusk lake ; the larger one to the left is Mangerton. Between these two mountains there is an extensive

valley, through which a romantic road is carried from the town of Killarney to the head of Kenmare river. On a clear sunny day, a very delightful instance of gradation of light is generally observable on the side of Mangerton from this point. The time for beholding it is late in the afternoon, when the sun has passed behind the mountains of the great chain. Tusk, intercepting the rays of the sun, spreads a solemn gloom over the landscape at its base, whilst the light darting through the opening between it and Mangerton, richly illuminates the bold cliffs which overhang the valley; and, gradually diminishing along the swell of the mountains, casts a fainter and still fainter gleam on the projecting rocks, as they recede from the source of illumination.

Ross castle is said to have been built by a powerful sept or tribe of O'Donoghues. It was a place of strength in the time of Cromwell, and resisted for some time the attacks of the parliamentary army under the command of General Ludlow, who gives the following account of its capture :

“ In the mean time, I was not wanting in my endeavour to reduce the enemy in Ireland, and to that end marched with about four thousand foot, and two thousand horse, towards Ross, in Kerry, where the Lord Muskerry made his principal rendezvous, and which was the only place of strength the Irish had left, except the woods, bogs, and mountains, being a

kind of island encompassed on every part by water, except on one side, upon which there is a bog not passable but by a causeway which the enemy had fortified. In this expedition I was accompanied by the Lords Broghill, and Sir Hardress Waller, major-general of the foot. Being arrived at this place, I was informed that the enemy received continual supplies from those parts that lay on the other side, and were covered with woods and mountains; whereupon I sent a party of two thousand foot to clear these woods, and to find out some convenient place for the erecting a fort, if there should be occasion. These forces met with some opposition, but at last they routed the enemy, killing some, and taking others prisoners; the rest saved themselves by their good footmanship. Whilst this was doing, I employed that part of the army which was with me in fortifying a neck of land, where I designed to leave a party to keep in the Irish on this side, that I might be at liberty, with the greatest part of the horse and foot, to look after the enemy abroad, and to receive and convoy such boats, and other things necessary, as the commissioners sent us by sea. When we had received our boats, each of which was capable of containing one hundred and twenty men, I ordered one of them to be rowed about the water, in order to find out the most convenient place for landing upon the enemy; which they perceiving, thought fit, by a timely sub-

mission, to prevent the danger that threatened them ; and having expressed their desires to that purpose, commissioners were appointed on both sides to treat. A fortnight was spent in debating upon the terms, but articles were finally signed, and hostages delivered on both sides ; in consequence of which five thousand horse and foot laid down their arms, and surrendered their horses.”

General Ludlow, in this account, does not inform us by what means his boats were conveyed to the lake ; yet they could not have been brought thither without the greatest difficulty. The river Laune, which runs from Killarney to the sea, is much too shallow, when flowing at its ordinary level, to float a boat capable of carrying one hundred and twenty men ; and when it is swelled by floods, the current acquires an impetuosity that could only tend to augment the difficulty. In the chronological table entitled *Gesta Hibernorum*, which is added to the *Annals of Sir James Ware*, the event is recorded in the following words :—“ Ross, in the county of Kerry, a castle in an island, is yielded up to Ludlow, after he had caused a small ship to be carried over the mountains and set afloat in the lough, which terrified the enemy.” Ludlow himself mentions several vessels. To have conveyed these over the mountains, covered as they then were with forests, and along roads that were probably little better than bridle-

paths of the present day, must have been a most difficult and enterprising undertaking.

Ross castle gives rank and emolument to a governor. The officer who at present enjoys this dignity was indebted, it is said, for his nomination to some confusion which arose as to the topography of the place from a similarity of names. Having, during the disastrous troubles of the year 1793, performed an achievement alike honourable to himself and advantageous to his country, at the new town of New Ross, in the county of Wexford, the government of this castle, on the peaceable confines of Killarney, no sooner became vacant than he was instantly invested with it, through the bounty of his sovereign, as an appropriate reward for his meritorious services.

The island of Ross, a few years since, was one of the most enchanting spots within the whole surrounding region. It was then covered to the water's edge with majestic oaks, which formed

———— a shade

High roof'd, with walks beneath and alleys brown,
That open'd in the midst a woody scene :—
Nature's own work.

The luxuriant masses of foliage, mixed with the grey rocks, the distant mountains, and the wide expanse of water interspersed with clusters of wooded islands gradually receding behind each other, formed altogether a combination of natural objects rarely sur-

passed in picturesque beauty. During the summer of the year 1803, these stately trees were all felled ; and the tranquillity of this once sequestered and delightful spot yielded to the noise and bustle of commerce.* The beauty of this island, however, is not,

* No person who had beheld these woods in all their glory could contrast the memory of that state with the present desolation of the scene, without inquiring into the motives of their removal. In answer to my questions on the spot, I was informed that the trees had attained their full growth ; that many of them had shown symptoms of decay ; and that they were declining in value every year. I received the same account of the woods of Gleng, the whole of which were likewise condemned to fall. With regard to the latter, however, which I had full opportunity to examine, an erroneous opinion, I am persuaded, had been formed. Some of the trees were decayed, and others apparently unhealthy ; but this resulted alone from a total neglect of thinning. Had the declining or unhealthy trees been removed, and a proper space opened for the extension of the arms of the remainder, and the admission of air, the woods would soon have assumed a flourishing aspect, and become more valuable. A considerable quantity of timber might have been cut with immediate profit, and the ultimate value of the woods been augmented. The system of thinning woods, unfortunately for the beauty, and, I believe, unfortunately for the benefit of the country, is but little attended to in Ireland ; so that it is very rare to meet with timber of a size suitable for ship-building. In the county of Wicklow, and some other parts of the kingdom where oak woods abound, it is the practice to cut down all the trees every twenty or twenty-five years, on a calculation that the interest of the money for which they sell, added to the value of the next growth, during a similar period of time, affords a greater produce than the wood would do, if suffered to remain standing for fifty years together. From the accurate observations, however, of a gentleman in the county of Wicklow, who possesses some of the finest woods I am acquainted with in Ireland, and who has himself found the greatest advantage from the system of



and, fortunately, cannot be, altogether destroyed. The bold masses of rocks at the head of the several little bays and inlets with which the shores are indented, crowned with venerable yews, and interspersed with shrubs and small trees, whose humility saved them from the general devastation, still afford admirable foregrounds, and the more distant part of the landscape can only change with the revolutions of nature.

To scenes like these, combining in such rare asso-

thinning gradually, there can be no doubt but that the latter is a practice at once the most profitable to the proprietor, and most beneficial to the country. A discussion of this subject may be found in Frazer's Statistical Survey of the County of Wicklow, and also in a valuable little Treatise on Planting, published by the late Colonel Hayes of Avondale, in the same county. In consequence of the prevalent custom of cutting down woods at an early growth, without any reservation, oak timber of a gross size bears a most enormous price in almost every part of Ireland. I found many persons coming to Ross island, from places distant above forty miles, to purchase as much oak wood as could be carried away with one horse. The common mode of conveyance was to affix, on each side of the horse, a piece of timber like the shafts of a cart, to a loop thrown across his back, and the other ends were suffered to trail upon the ground. The persons who purchased these extensive woods at Killarney were allowed twelve years for felling the timber, in what annual proportions they please; though the purchase-money is only payable by regular stipulated instalments: the latter was stated to me at fifteen thousand pounds; and I was informed from good authority, that their profits were likely to amount to at least twenty thousand. It was some gratification to perceive that parts of Ross island, where the woods had been felled, had been afterwards extremely well planted, and fenced with care.

ciation the most attractive objects of simple nature, with the melancholy marks of the ravages of man, will Genius retire to indulge its raptures, or afflicted Sensibility to ease its cares. Wandering one day amongst the solitudes of this island, I surprised a poor musician, who sat upon a rude stone at the foot of one of the few large trees that had escaped the general havoc. He seemed wholly absorbed in contemplating the scene around him, while he drew from his instrument tones according with that melancholy which the devastation of it was so well calculated to inspire. On my approach, he broke off with a wild cadence, and entered abruptly into conversation. A few words were sufficient to betray a loss of intellect; but the incoherent rhapsodies of insanity were replete with traits of energy and feeling. He had been playing, he told me, in different parts of the island for five hours that morning; and, pointing round with his hand, asked, with no small degree of enthusiasm, if I was not enchanted with the lake, the rocks, the mountains?—For his part, in the midst of such scenery, with his violin for a companion, he found himself quite happy, and wished for nothing.* The neighbouring people, he added, supplied him with

* Avez-vous donc connu ces rapports invisibles
Des corps inanimés et des êtres sensibles ?
Avez-vous entendu des eaux, des prés, des bois,
La muette éloquence et la secrète voix ?

food and lodging ; they also gave him clothes to cover him, and administered to all his wants : in short, he was happy—very happy.

This man possessed considerable talents for music ; he understood composition, and played well on a variety of instruments. He had formerly enlisted in a regiment of militia as a clarionet player ; but, for incorrigible drunkenness, was sentenced to receive punishment, and be dismissed from the service. The regiment lay at that time in the barracks of Ross castle. The culprit was marched in form into the adjoining woods, tied to a tree, and the drummers began to perform their duty. Through compassion for his infirmity, a few lashes only were inflicted, and he was then released : but the terror of punishment operated so strongly on a mind endowed by nature with much sensibility, and debilitated by habitual intoxication, that he became almost instantaneously deprived of his senses, and never afterwards perfectly recovered them.

The retirement of Ross island was likewise interrupted by the re-opening of the mines on the western side of the island. These mines were worked at a very early period, and numerous ancient tools of the rudest description have been found about the place ; in particular, stones of an oblong spheroidical shape, which appear to have been used as hammers for breaking the ore : the ends are in general much battered,

and their girths marked with a slight indenture, obviously intended to confine the ligaments by which they were fastened to the handles. The old shafts are all filled with water, which is supposed to have rushed in owing to the unskilful conduct of the miners in carrying their works too near the lake ; and the mine lay for a long time totally neglected, until the year 1804, when a gentleman from Cornwall, who had examined it some time before, through curiosity, whilst occupied with the duties of his military profession, undertook himself to open it. A capital, raised on shares, was soon provided sufficient for the purpose, and the scheme was attended with immediate advantage. No attempts were made to draw off the water from that part of the mine with which the shafts communicated, which probably would have been a hazardous speculation : the first efforts of the adventurers were directed solely to draining a narrow oblong pit, which appeared formerly to have been opened with a view of following a vein of ore near the lake ; and, having attained their object, they discovered at the bottom of it a rich bed of lead and of copper, which was raised with great facility, and afforded for a time considerable profit.* The chief produce when I visited the place, in the year 1804, was compact and common galena, and yellow copper

* The works have since proved very unsuccessful.

ore : the former were both of an excellent quality ; but the copper pyrites, from the great proportion of iron it contained, seemed inferior to the specimens which I have found on the peninsula at Mucruss. Brown and yellow blende and grey copper are also found at Ross. The vein stone is calcareous, with some intermixture of argillaceous schistus.

Before the company was formed which now conducts the mine, several speculators were attracted hither by the reports which they had heard of the richness of the ore. I happened one day to be present whilst two of those people, rough Lancashire men, were examining the old works. They soon formed a judgment, and at once relinquished the idea of engaging in the enterprise ; but the spirit of speculation was active in their minds. Casting their eyes around, they suddenly conceived the project of draining the lake ; and began vauntingly to declare *what a deal of land* they could add to the possessions of Lord Kenmare, were he to employ them in such an undertaking. I know not whether they would have laid their proposals seriously before his lordship, had they been allowed to proceed with their calculations ; but such an outcry was instantly raised against them by the surrounding peasants and by the boatmen, whose pride and interest were both alarmed at the idea of the lake being converted into dry land, that the poor frightened engineers were well pleased to re-

linquish their golden dreams, and to obtain immediate safety by a precipitate retreat.

Attempts were actually made, some years ago, to reduce the water in the lake, for the purpose of facilitating the operations at the mines of Mucruss. To this end, a cut was made from the river Laune near Dunloh castle, which it was imagined, by avoiding a sand-bar, would enable a greater quantity of water to escape ; but the alteration it made in the level of the lake was scarcely perceptible. Should this object at any future time become desirable, it will be alone attainable by enlarging the channel of that river at its source, the only outlet for the waters in the whole circuit of the surrounding shore : but, fortunately for the admirers of this attractive lake, nature has interposed an insurmountable impediment to its being entirely drained, if avaricious speculation should ever dream of the attempt ; for the fall from its level to the tide-water is considerably less than the actual depth of the lake.

At a short distance from the mines in Ross island there is a quarry from which a considerable quantity of marble is annually raised. It is commonly used for the manufacture of hearths and chimney-pieces throughout the adjacent district ; but its principal consumption seems to be for tomb-stones ; to purchase which, numerous people, apparently but ill able to afford the expense, come across the moun-



J. W. del.

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tains, from places, in some instances, distant upwards of twenty miles. The marble is generally of a pale ash colour, streaked with white and red veins ; some of it is of a pale red colour, and some pale isabella yellow : the varieties are very numerous. Its arrangement in the earth is stratified, and it is easily raised in very large pieces.

The island of Ross, being situated nearly midway between the extremities of the lake, separates it into two divisions, which the boatmen, who appear to be acquainted with the cardinal points alone, distinguish, though not with sufficient accuracy, by the terms of eastern and western : this mode of designating locality is common to all the people of Kerry, who extend the exercise of it to the ordinary instructions which are given to the inquiring traveller on the public road.

In entering upon a description of the lower lake, I shall begin with that division which lies between Ross island and the river Laune, and shall suppose that we are proceeding from the castle through the bay of Ross towards Innisfallen island.

As the water is much deeper under Ross island than it is at the opposite side of the bay, the boats are usually kept close under the rocky shore. Several little wooded promontories here overhang the lake, on approaching which the attention is continually kept alive, by the hope of discovering some new

landscape behind them ; but no part of the distant scene is revealed till you reach the mouth of the bay, when, on doubling a rocky point, an extensive prospect of the mountains, with a wide expanse of the lake, suddenly burst upon the eye. I have attempted to give a representation of this prospect. The woods on the right are those of Innisfallen island ; the foreground, a part of the shore of Ross ; Mouse island is seen in the middle channel, and in the distance Tomies mountain.

Several small islands appear at the mouth of Ross bay, the most remarkable of which is a large rock of limestone, about twenty feet in height ; on one side nearly perpendicular, and not unlike a wall. It is called O'Donaghoe's prison ; and, according to the legendary tales of the country, was employed by the good old prince of that name, in former times, as a place of confinement for his disobedient son and rebellious associates :

There, during life, the factious were immured,
And peace and order without blood secured.

In what age the great O'Donaghoe flourished, the tradition of whose virtues is fondly transmitted from generation to generation, is not easily determinable ; but that a distinguished prince of that name did once actually reign over this favoured region, is a point so established by the testimony of concurrent tradition,

as scarcely to require confirmation from the page of history.

“ His countrymen,” says an anonymous writer, “ represent him like the demigods of old—a contemner of danger ; a sworn foe to oppression ; a passionate admirer of whatever is great and honourable. The severity of his warlike virtues was tempered by a generous hospitality, which embraced a friend in every stranger. The rigour of the legislator was blended and lost in the endearing condescension of the friend : the prince was the father of his country ; his court was the seat of joy and festivity : worth took its place at the board by inherent birthright ; grey hairs received their reverence, and distressed innocence had a peculiar plea of admission, for humanity was paramount, and suspicious policy absolutely unknown. He was wise too ; and the gods sped his counsels, for his subjects were happy. Fruitful seasons crowned the year with plenty, and undisturbed tranquillity led the way to enjoyment.”

Such was the auspicious reign of this excellent prince : nay, more ; still solicitous about the prosperity of his ancient dominions, it is believed he quits at times the regions of immortal bliss, and appears in person among the descendants of his people. I have met men who related the tale with all the enthusiasm of religious faith, and who asserted most solemnly they had themselves beheld the apparition :

happily, however, for the cause of common sense, the numbers who give credit to it daily decrease. In a poem entitled Killarney, the legend is fully related ; the following lines from it are descriptive of his first appearance :—

Once, on a day distinguish'd from the rest,
 Surrounded by his subjects at the feast,
 Cheerful he sat, and in prophetic rhymes
 Darkling rehears'd the fate of future times :—
 While from his tongue divine prediction flow'd,
 And firm belief in every bosom glow'd,
 Sudden he rose, and, to the gazing throng,
 As some light vision seem'd to skim along :—
 The neighbouring lake wide op'd its willing wave,
 And quick received him in a crystal grave.

* * * * *

Some years were past, when, as the usual day
 Of solemn mourning brought them forth to pay
 The tribute of their tears ;—with streaming eyes
 They call'd on Donaghoe to hear their cries ;
 Implored the dire abyss, in piteous strain,
 To give them back their Donaghoe again.
 Soft, at a solemn interval, the sound
 Of airs celestial fill'd the scene around :
 The hills, the dales, the shores began to smile,
 And tenfold brighter shone the royal isle :
 The sylvan songsters warbled from each spray,
 The waters blush'd as at the rising day :
 Thunder at length the awful signal gave ;
 A form all glorious started from the wave :—
 'Twas Donaghoe.

The appearance of O'Donaghoe is considered a most propitious omen to the person who is fortunate enough to behold him ; and the eye of the wander-

ing peasant eagerly searches for him along the windings of the lake. The prince is always described as being mounted on a milk-white steed. May it not then be supposed that the white foam of a distant wave, suddenly curled up by a gust of wind from the mountains, has often been converted by the enthusiastic imagination of the simple and superstitious native, into the semblance of a horse and his rider, whose preternatural appearance his interest and credulity are alike perpetually anticipating?*

The name of O'Donaghoe is common in the town of Killarney and throughout the neighbouring district; and a person who is deemed to be the lineal descendant of the ancient chieftain of the sept or clan, is sedulously distinguished from the rest; not, however, by the means of a pompous title, but, on the contrary, by being called simply O'Donaghoe; to annex even the common title of Mr to his name would be considered a gross derogation from his dignity.

At a short distance from O'Donaghoe's prison lies the beautiful island of Innisfallen,

* Ariosto presents us with a similar image in his description of a tempest:

Sorgono altere e minacciose l'onde,
Mugghiando sopra 'l mar va 'l gregge bianco.

Orl. Fu. xli. 9.

. so sweet and pleasant to the eye,
That it would tempt a man to touchen there.

From the water it appears to be entirely covered with
an impervious wood,

In every leaf of various green array'd :

but after passing under the lofty shade, which forms a skreen along the shores, the interior part is found spread out into natural lawns, diversified with clumps of trees and masses of grey rock. From these delightful openings the blue tops of the mountains on the south side of the lake are beheld towering above the surrounding woods ; whilst, between the boles of the trees, the water appears sparkling below, and occasionally is seen a reach of the distant shore. In the disposition of these grounds, the hand of art can only be traced in forming a shrubbery among the rocks, and surrounding the isle with a gravel walk under the tall trees growing near the water. The walk cannot be deemed an embellishment, but it adds materially to the accommodation and pleasure of occasional visitors, who, during wet weather, might otherwise be deterred from surveying the internal beauties of this interesting spot. A curious old yew-tree springing from the crevice of a rock, and which at once forms a commodious seat and an agreeable shade,* is point-

* a shady bank

Thick overhead with verdant roof embower'd.

Paradise Lost, b. ix. l. 1037, *et subseq.*

ed out in the shrubbery as an object of attention. It is called the *fruitful yew*; and some strange particulars of its virtues are related by the guides, with a faith nothing doubting. Those who visit the delightful regions of Killarney may be gratified, if they please, with the recital of this legendary tale. I can only say, that the story is connected with that of a fond pair, who, on a sweet evening, at a season of the year

When nature all wears to the lover's eye
A look of love,—

having chanced to stray along the sequestered walks of this terrestrial paradise, suddenly found their hearts enchained by the captivating song of a little bird, which warbled through the groves, not less melodiously than that in the enchanted garden of Armida,

Cogliam d'amor la rosa, or amiamo quando
Esser si puote riamato amando.

Trees of all sorts, but more particularly the ash and the holly,* attain a much larger size on this island than on any part of the neighbouring shores; a conclusive proof of the great fertility of the soil: and the natural herbage possesses such an extraordinary power for fattening cattle, that its excellence is proverbial

* I measured one holly whose bole was ten feet in circumference, and the tree was sound and vigorous.

throughout the country. One would think that the recollection of this place was fresh in the memory of Spenser when he drew the description of the island in the idle lake.*

It was a chosen plott of fertile land
 Emongst wide waves sett, like a little nest ;
 As if it had by Nature's cunning hand
 Bene choycely picked out from all the rest,
 And laid forth for ensample of the best.

Towards Ross, the shores of Innisfallen are low and shelving, and the water very shallow, as the numerous rounded black stones which appear above the surface, at a considerable distance from the land, indicate : the opposite side of the island, totally different in its character, presents a barrier of bold rocks rising perpendicularly from the water to the height of twenty feet. In tempestuous weather, immense billows are rolled from the great body of the lake against these rocks, and they break with a terrific noise, which resounds through the woods of the island. From the shallowness of the shores on one side of the

* That Spenser was indebted for much of his imagery to the rich and romantic scenes of the south of Ireland, is generally admitted. The distance of Kilcolman castle, where he resided whilst engaged in the composition of his *Faerie Queen*, from the lake of Killarney, is not more than one day's easy journey ; it may be presumed, therefore, that such an attractive and beautiful spot could not have escaped the minute attention of the poet.

island, and the steepness of rocks on the other, it would be difficult to land, were it not for two little quays which have been built, in sheltered situations, at the east corner of the island ; but with these accommodations all difficulty has been removed.

Innisfallen is indented with several little coves and inlets, resembling those on Ross island, but superior in picturesque beauty, from being skirted with lofty trees. More delightful studies for the pencil are scarcely to be found, whether they be viewed under the influence of the storm, or during the stillness of a summer's evening, when the lake presents an unruffled surface, and the images of the various objects on the shore appear

Smooth gloss'd and soften'd in the mirror's breast.

The woods of the island, presenting a beautiful appearance from the water on every side, are seen to most advantage after the first frosts in the autumnal season, when the ash trees growing near the shore, tinged with yellow, display the elegance of their light pensile foliage, relieved by the rich green of the oaks.

Innisfallen contains upwards of twelve Irish acres, or, according to some computations, eighteen. The Irish plantation acre differs from the English statute acre in the proportion of the square of fourteen to the square of eleven ; that is, nearly as five to three.

As no spot within the confines of Killarney pos-

sesses more attractions, so none is so much resorted to as Innisfallen ; and that not only by passing strangers, but by the resident gentry of the country, who, during summer, frequently give *fêtes champêtres* on this island to large parties of their neighbouring friends. The amusements, on these occasions, consist of such as accord with the nature of the place. Some, with a chosen company, put off from the island and row or sail along the shores, to display their own dexterity, or the superior excellence of their boats, which, decked with their gayest colours, diffuse an air of uncommon cheerfulness over the scene. Some wander through the woods ; whilst others, reclined on the rocky beach, find pleasure in contemplating the magnificence of the surrounding landscape ; or perhaps continue listening to the sound of music, “ by distance made more sweet.” Dancing on the green sod, in the mean time, engages the more gay ; and often, the length of a summer’s day being insufficient to complete the enjoyment, the festive entertainment is protracted through the cool and stilly hours of the night,

. . . . while over head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course.

If a visit to Innisfallen happen to be made for the first time under favourable circumstances, when the shores, instead of being crowded by different parties,

are seen in all their native simplicity, it seldom fails to inspire, at least for the moment, very enthusiastic feelings on the subject of rural retirement. There is something, indeed, in the idea of a beautiful island secluded from the noisy intercourse of the world, on which the mind dwells with peculiar pleasure; and we accordingly find that such places have furnished themes through all ages for the most voluptuous descriptions of poetry. The peaceful and retired situation of Innisfallen did not escape the notice of the monks; and it early became the seat of a distinguished abbey, whose remains are still visible near the landing-place. It was founded and endowed towards the close of the sixth century by Finan,* son of one of the kings of Munster; and, in after times, became appropriated to the use of the regular canons of St Augustin. This noble person was eminent, we are told, for his great learning and extraordinary piety, and was one of the very many who were esteemed deserving of canonization about the same period. Indeed, so great was the number of these pious contemporaries, whose memory was thus honoured in Ireland, that the country soon came to be distinguished by the appellation of the *Island of Saints*.

That Ireland, during the ages which succeeded the introduction of Christianity, was celebrated amidst

* Act. SS. Golgan. Festiv.—16 Martis.

the surrounding nations as the seat of learning and tranquillity, is generally admitted. By the zeal of the Irish missionaries, it is said, many of the Northumbrians, east Angles, and northern Picts,* were converted; and some of those who were most conspicuous for their abilities, at the express invitation of the potentates of the country, went into Burgundy and Germany, to preside over the convents which had been lately founded there.† The venerable Bede, in his Church History, gives a most pleasing account of the state of Ireland during the seventh century.‡

* Bede, Hist. Eccles. l. iii. cap. 4.

† Camden Brit. Ireland, vol. II. p. 1317.—Gibson's edit.

‡ Erant ibidem, eo tempore, multi nobilium simul et mediocrium, de gente Anglorum, qui tempore Finani et Colmani episcoporum, relictâ insula patria, vel divinæ lectionis, vel continentioris vitæ gratia, illo secesserant. Et quidam, quidem, mox se monasticæ conversationi fideliter manciperunt, alii magis circumeundo per cellas magistrorum, lectioni operam dare gaudebant; quos omnes Scotti¶ libentissime suscipientes, victum eis quotidianum sine pretio, libros quoque ad legendum, et magisterium gratuitum præbere curabant. —Hist. Eccles. l. iii. cap. 27.

¶ Bede here calls the inhabitants of Ireland Scots; and, in the first chapter of his first book, he says that Ireland is the proper country of the Scots, from which a colony had migrated into Britain, and thus added a third nation to the Britons and Picts. Be this as it may, the appellation of Scots, applied indiscriminately to the inhabitants of Ireland, and to those of Scotland, by some of the Anglo-Saxons, has given rise to disputations, between modern writers on Scottish and Irish antiquities, which cannot be read without a smile; as, for instance, on the subject of the birth-place of Johannes Scotus Erigena, the most learned man of the ninth century. The Irish writers maintain that his surname of Erigena clearly indicates the place of his nativity; *Ere* or *Erin* being the proper name of Ireland. The Scotch, on the contrary, will not give him up, but insist that *Erigena* signifies that he was born in the town of *Ayr* in Scotland.

See M'Kenzie's Scotch Writers—Henry's Hist. of Britain, book ii.—Sir James Ware's Irish Writers—Du Pin, &c.

“ At that period,” says he, “ when Finan and Colman were bishops, there were many of the English nobility, as well as persons of inferior rank, who, leaving their native island, retired thither (into Ireland) for the sake of religious instruction, or of leading a more continent life. Of these, some devoted themselves entirely to the conversation of the monks; whilst others, visiting the cells of their masters, took more delight in reading. The Irish received them all most willingly; maintained them free of expense; provided them with books to read, and directed their studies without any fee or reward whatsoever.”

What a delightful and liberal system! How different from that pursued by many mercenary pedagogues of the present day, who, without inclination or abilities to discharge the important duties of education, undertake that most sacred of all trusts, for the mere purposes of private emolument; and thus at once defraud parents of their money, and children of their instruction!

The most noted schools in Ireland at this early period were those of Armagh, and of Clonard, in the county of Meath; but it is probable that many of the smaller monasteries had also their scholars and inmates; and even the retired abbey of Innisfallen might have been amongst the number. Fancy at least is willing to indulge in the idea, and fondly recalls the time when this little island was the abode of

piety and learning. Here the venerable fathers are seen meditating in their cells ; here straying through the lofty groves in deep conversation with their pupils ; here, at the solemn silent close of day, seated on one of those rocks which ages have not altered, contemplating the varied beauties of nature ; and, from the splendour of the departing sun, drawing inferences of the glories of that celestial paradise towards which their enthusiastic hopes unceasingly aspired.

. Let us here
Content and grateful wait th' appointed time,
And ripen for the skies ; the hour will come
When all these splendours, bursting on the sight,
Shall stand unveil'd, and to the ravish'd sense
Unlock the glories of the world unknown.

Such liberal conduct, on the part of the Irish monks, argued no ordinary degree of enthusiasm in the cause of learning ; but of the nature and extent of that learning no traces are left. In the beginning of the ninth century, Turgesse the Dane, and his sanguinary followers, desolated the kingdom for the space of thirty years, massacring all the clergy whom they could find, and destroying their books, their monasteries, their churches, and every monument that could perpetuate to posterity the blessings of their knowledge, or the records of their virtues : by which calamity “ this most flourishing island,” to use

the expression of Archbishop Usher,* “ was once more reduced to a state of barbarism.” The destruction of the few remaining specimens of ancient literature seems to have been intended in the reign of Elizabeth, when Sir George Carew, lord president of Munster, afterwards Earl of Totness, and the other English commanders in the island, were charged to collect all the manuscripts they could find, in order to remove every vestige of antiquity and letters in the kingdom.† The main object of this odious and unjust policy was to obliterate the remembrance of the origin and descent of the chiefs of particular tribes, which, being carefully preserved in their records and annals, acted as a bond of union between them and their dependents.

Lord Lyttelton observes, that “ the loss of these ancient manuscripts may well be deemed a misfortune, not only to the Irish, but to the whole learned world.‡ It must be remembered, however, that mankind is prone to over-rate the value of that which has been irrecoverably lost.§ So far as these manuscripts might have contributed to elucidate the remote and doubtful period of Irish history, they would unques-

* Eccles. Brit. Antiq.—Usher.

† Genealog. Notes on the Family of O’Sullivan.

‡ Hist. Henry II. book iv.

§ Virtutem incolumem odimus,
Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.

tionably have been curious and interesting ; but it is highly probable that they were not of that vast importance which some zealous writers on the subject of Irish antiquities have fondly imagined. If they had been so valuable, if they had contained any information of real use to the world, surely some traces of them would have been preserved. Several of the Irish, most eminent for their learning, had been invited, it appears, to the continent ; and others, who in after times found means to escape thither from the fury of the Danes, were received with open arms by the princes of the country where they took refuge. All these men, it may be presumed, would not have departed without any memorial of the history or genius of their countrymen. The mere vanity of displaying specimens of the literary productions of their native land would have prompted them to carry away copies of those performances which were most esteemed ; and, if they have perished in the progress of years, it must, in a great measure, be attributed to their insignificance. To the manuscript copies of the different performances of the venerable Bede which were transferred to the continent, and collected there in later times, we are indebted for the only complete edition of his works.*

The most ancient Irish manuscript, of which par-

* Henry's Hist. of Britain, book ii. chap. 4.

particular mention has been made, was the *Psaltrick** of Cashel, a metrical chronicle, composed by Cormac, son of Culinan, king and bishop of Munster, early in the tenth century. Sir James Ware asserts that it was extant in his time, and held in great estimation; and he adds, that he had himself a selection which was extracted from it three hundred years before: but as he does not mention where the original was to be seen, strong doubts are entertained of the accuracy of his information. It has been often searched for since his time, but in vain.

Of the manuscripts of a later date which are still preserved, one of the oldest and most remarkable appears to be a book of *Annals* written by a monk of the abbey of Innisfallen, about the year 1216. According to Sir James Ware,† this writer gives a short account of universal history till the year 430, or thereabouts; but, after this period, he treats very diligently of the affairs of Ireland to his own times. In the copy he possessed, the *Annals*, he informs us, were continued by another hand to the year 1320. Bishop Nicholson, in his *Irish Historical Library*, gives nearly the same account, and adds, that there was a copy of this manuscript in the library of the Duke of Chandos.

* This book has been commonly called the *Psalter* of Cashel, but very erroneously, as General Vallancey has informed me: the word *Psaltrick* signifies, in Irish, a chronicle.

† *Antiq. of Ireland*. Folio, Lond. 1704.

[Bibl. Chand. Membr. Hist. No. 26.] A third, but imperfect one, is to be found in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Sir James Ware employed persons to translate selected parts of these Annals; and many references to their authority are to be found in his works on the antiquities of Ireland: the editor of the *Monasticon Hibernicum* has also given extracts from them; but, as they only vary in some trifling particulars from those contained in the works of Sir James, it may be presumed that they were derived from the same source.

The two following passages are the most remarkable of those which appear in the *Monasticon*:—
 “Anno 1180.—This abbey of Innisfallen being ever esteemed a paradise and a secure sanctuary, the treasure and the most valuable effects of the whole country were deposited in the hands of the clergy; notwithstanding which, we find the abbey was plundered in this year by Maolduin, son of Daniel O’Donaghoe. Many of the clergy were slain, and even in their cemetery, by the Macarths. But God soon punished this act of impiety and sacrilege, by bringing many of its authors to an untimely end.”—“1197, Dec. 19th, died Gilla Patrick O’Huihair, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. He was archdeacon of Faithlin, superior of this convent, and the founder of many religious houses, to all of which he presented books, vestments, and all other necessary furniture. He

was a celebrated poet, and was in the highest estimation for his chaste life, piety, wisdom, and universal charity."

It has often been lamented that no complete translation should have been made of the *Annals of Innisfallen*, and of other ancient Irish manuscripts which are preserved in the public libraries; but the neglect with which they have been treated is in a great measure to be attributed to the frivolity of the matter contained in those writings which have been already examined. The Royal Irish Academy, not long since, employed persons to make an English version of two ancient histories, which had been presented to their library, called *The Book of Ballymote* and *The Annals of the Four Masters*. The legendary fictions, however, which they contained, predominated so much over those parts which had any pretensions to authenticity, that, after some progress in the work, the translations were stopped, as undeserving of further expense.

I have looked over these translations, and can bear testimony to the deplorable picture which they present of ignorance, credulity, and superstition.

The Book of Ballymote commences with an account of the creation, and represents the Deity at a loss to find a name for the newly-created man. Four angels are dispatched to the four quarters of the universe, each of whom returns with the name of a particular

star. The initial letters of the names of the four stars are put together, and the man is called A-D-A-M.

The Annals of the Four Masters, so called from having been compiled by four monks of Donegal, about the year 1636, from the most esteemed and ancient histories of Ireland that were then extant, begin, like the Book of Ballymote, with an account of the first inhabitants of the globe. They narrate, with much precision, the story of a small tribe, descended from one of the sons of Noah, which departs from Scythia, in quest of the land furthest to the west, which is supposed to have been promised to their tribe in a prophecy. After passing through Egypt, the adventurers embark for Crete ; thence they proceed along the shores of Africa to Spain, in which last country they settle, under a belief that there was no land more westward. Here they build a very lofty tower on the sea-shore, with a city called Brigantium. After remaining for three generations, however, in Spain, the chief of the tribe, on a remarkably clear tranquil evening, descends from the summit of the tower the coast of Ireland, still further to the west. The error being thus discovered, it is immediately determined to leave Spain : a fleet is prepared ; the whole tribe embarked ; and having arrived safely in Ireland, that country, after minute investigation, confirmed by numberless portentous signs, is ascertained to be really the promised land.

In these books a melancholy account is given of the incessant broils and bloody battles between the different septs, which continued to desolate the kingdom even long after the invasion of the English ; and on this part of the history probably some reliance may be placed.

Contemptible as these specimens of the monkish writings appear, it is nevertheless unfair to condemn all those manuscripts to oblivion which have hitherto remained unexamined. “ The monks,” as an agreeable writer has observed, “ were the only historians of their day ; and though their accounts be interwoven with many a legendary tale, and darkened by much superstition, still they are better than no histories at all, and we cannot but think ourselves obliged to them for transmitting to us in any dress the annals of their country.”

The late Henry Flood, long distinguished as one of the brightest ornaments of the Irish senate, was so fully persuaded of the importance of having all the Irish manuscripts which could be procured, examined by persons thoroughly versed in the Irish language, that he bequeathed a considerable estate to the university of Dublin for that purpose, and for establishing a professorship of the Irish language :* and those

* The title to this estate has been contested at law, and the decisions of the court, hitherto, have been unfavourable to the university.

who will be at the pains of perusing a small volume, written by Sir Laurence Parsons, (now Lord Ross) in justification of the bequest, and in vindication of the ancient history of Ireland, will, perhaps, feel inclined to pay more attention to this subject than it has already received from persons having leisure and opportunity to devote themselves to such pursuits.

The remains of the abbey of Innisfallen are situated at the north-eastern extremity of the island, within a grove of lofty ash trees ; they are in a very perishable state, and fast approaching to their end :

Ruin hangs hovering o'er the fatal place,
And dumb Oblivion comes with mended pace.

The abbey church consisted of a single aisle, seventy feet long, and twenty wide ; and from the narrowness of the few windows which can be now traced, it must, like other ancient churches of Ireland, have been extremely dark. At the south-east corner, a very large fragment of the wall, in which there are some hewn stones which appear to have once formed part of an arch, stands detached from the rest of the building ; a circumstance which leads to the supposition of its having suffered some more sudden and more violent injury than the mere attacks of time alone could have inflicted : probably the soldiers of the parliamentary army, at the time the castle of Ross was besieged, were instrumental to its destruction.

The architecture of the cloister, and of what seem to have been the dwelling apartments of the abbey, is most rude : no remains of sculptured ornaments ; no lofty arches ; no spacious windows are here observable. The cloister was only thirty-eight feet square ; but though its walls are very much dilapidated, the limits of its covered walk, and the apertures opening into the interior area, may be distinctly traced.

At a short distance from the principal ruins, there are three other buildings, two of which, that are in a decayed state, evidently belonged to the abbey ; but whether the third, which lies to the west of the church, and which is now inhabited by the people who take care of the island, ever formed a part of it, seems doubtful. The guides point out, just behind it, the garden of the abbey, which still contain some plum-trees of great age, and some large thorns coeval with them, which appear to have once formed the surrounding hedge.

Of all the remains of antiquity at this place, the most interesting, and the only one which has any claim to picturesque beauty, is a small chapel or oratory, covered with ivy, which stands on a mass of rocks close to the water. One might be tempted to believe that Spenser had this place also in his recollection when he wrote the following lines :

And nigh thereto a little chappel stooode,
Which, being all with yvy overspred,

Deckt all the roofe, and, shadowing the roode,
Seem'd like a grove fair braunched over hed.

From the architecture of the door-case,* which has a Saxon arch decorated with chevron ornaments, I should suppose that this building was of a date subsequent to that of the church. One half of this door-case alone remains perfect ; the other part has been plastered and bedaubed with red clay, with an endeavour to make it correspond. On removing a broad stone near the entrance of the door, some time ago, a great quantity of human bones was found heaped together. Perhaps these were the bones of the clergy and those who were slain in the cemetery, as the *Annals* mention ; and over whom, to expiate the sacrilege, the descendants of the murderers had erected a chapel for the orisons that, according to the superstitious custom of the times, would daily be poured forth for the rest of their souls.

This little building has, within a few years, been fitted up as a place of entertainment, under the pompous appellation of the banqueting-house. The walls at the inside have been smoothly plastered and whitened ; two modern bow-windows have been opened to the north and south, and the floor has been boarded. One cannot but deplore the frivolity of that taste which has thus injudiciously metamorphosed it. The

* See the vignette in the title-page.

changes which are effected by time, command our reverence, and dispose the soul to contemplation: but these discordant alterations of the works of ancient days untune the mind, and interrupt that course of thought which the remains of antiquity are calculated to inspire. Skilful management might have rendered it equally commodious, and, at the same time, have preserved its proper character. Not only has this little building been injured by the alterations already alluded to, but, as if purposely to diminish its picturesque beauty, it has been surrounded with white painted rails, trim gravel walks, and a thick thorn hedge, which effectually excludes, on one side, the view of the lake.

Though the abbey of Innisfallen was founded as early as the sixth century, it does not follow, nor is it indeed likely, that the walls, of which remains are now visible, were erected at that remote period; but on this subject we can only indulge conjecture. The history of monastic edifices in Ireland is involved in impenetrable obscurity: little even of their decline is known, but what can be collected from the statute-books.

On an inquiry being made into the state of the religious houses of Ireland, under a commission appointed by King Henry the Eighth, it was found that they all required a total reformation; and fourteen abbots and ten priors, following the steps of their

brethren in England, surrendered their rights and possessions into the hands of the king. The religious houses over which they presided are particularly mentioned in an act of the Irish parliament passed in the year 1537.* Five years afterwards another act was passed, to enable his majesty to take possession of the property of all such religious houses as had theretofore voluntarily surrendered, or that should afterwards surrender, their rights, or be dissolved; and the superiors of all religious houses, then existing, were disqualified from alienating any part of their property, except to his majesty. The act concludes with subjecting all the houses that had not been dissolved to the visitation of the ordinary of the diocese, or of such persons as the king should think proper to appoint.

It may be presumed, however, that the superiors of the monastic institutions of Kerry were not much influenced by these regulations, as that county was then a palatinate endowed with great privileges, whose earls had repeatedly resisted the authority both of the laws and of the king. Ware informs us, that during the beginning of the reign of Henry the Eighth,† in consequence of the extraordinary powers assumed by the Earls of Desmond, and the opinion that gene-

* 27 Hen. VIII. cap. xvi.—33 Hen. VIII. cap. v.

† Annals of Ireland.

rally prevailed throughout the kingdom, of the exemption of that county from the jurisdiction of the laws, Kerry had become the resort of outlaws, and of all persons in fear of legal punishment. In fact, we find that it was not until ten years after the attainder and death of the last Earl of Desmond,* in the reign

* The history of the last Earl of Desmond contains many interesting particulars. After various changes of fortune, having fallen into the power of the crown, he had been delivered as a state prisoner to the custody of the mayor of Dublin, who had orders to provide him with good accommodation, and to indulge him in every manner that was consistent with his safety. The mayor allowed him to go abroad on his parole, excepting at the hours of noon and night, when he was obliged to make his appearance. Desmond, for a time, kept his parole very punctually; but having one day obtained permission to leave the city, to take the diversion of hunting, he rode off from his attendants at full speed, and found means not long afterwards to reach his own territory. A proclamation was immediately issued, offering a reward of one thousand pounds in money, and a pension of forty pounds a-year, to the person who should take him alive; and half that reward to him who should bring his head. The earl, however, found a strong body of his adherents, who pledged themselves in the most solemn manner to defend him and his rights, so that the officers of the queen found it expedient to open negotiations with persons on his behalf. Concessions were made on both sides, and he received forgiveness. Some time afterwards he was again accused of treason; but once more negotiating, and making solemn protestations of fidelity for the future, he was again pardoned and received into favour. It was discovered, however, that, after all his promises, he maintained a secret correspondence with those inveterate foes of Elizabeth, the Spaniards; in consequence of which a strong force was at last sent to compel him to obedience. This force succeeded in defeating and dispersing the main body of his adherents, and finally reduced Desmond himself to the greatest extremity, so that many of his best friends began to

of Queen Elizabeth, the great epoch of the settlement of this county, and of the division of the lands, that the monks were dispossessed of the abbey of Innisfallen,* and a grant of it made to Robert Collam.

forsake him. In this situation he was obliged to conceal himself; and, partly to supply his immediate wants, partly from motives of revenge, wandered about his own dominions, plundering such of his people as had deserted him. One day he sent some of his servants to take prey, near Tralee, a few miles distant from Killarney; in performing which service they seized upon some cows belonging to a poor woman. In the bitterness of her grief she went to the governor of Castlemain, who immediately ordered a party of soldiers to accompany her in search of the plunderers. They followed the tracks of the cattle until the close of day, when, weary with the pursuit, they proposed to stop for the night in a wood. They had not remained long in this position when one of the party espied a light, at a considerable distance, through the trees, and eagerly hastening towards it, they discovered that it proceeded from a hovel where an old man was seated over a fire, with some people around him. A soldier, of the name of Kelly, instantly rushed in, and smote the old man with a sword upon the head and upon the arm. Terrified at the suddenness of the assault, he cried out, in a plaintive voice, *Oh save me, for I am the Earl of Desmond!* But perceiving that his wounds bled very profusely, and that he could not survive, the soldiers bade him prepare for death, and soon after cut off his head, which was sent to England, and placed on a pole on London Bridge. "Such an end," says Camden, "had this once powerful man in Ireland, who derived his pedigree from Maurice Fitzgerald of Windsor, an Englishman of great renown, amongst the first conquerors of Ireland, in the year 1170. He had very fair lands and possessions; yea, whole provinces, with Kerry, a county palatine; and, of his own kindred, he had above five hundred gentlemen at his own disposal."—*Vide CAMDEN's History of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, book iii.—*WARE's Annals, in the Reigns of Henry the Eighth, Mary, and Elizabeth*.—*Peerage, under Earls of Kildare*.

* Monasticon Hib. Archdall. —Aud. Gen.

Its possessions were estimated at three plough lands, containing one hundred and twenty acres of arable land, with the appurtenances. But this abbey, as well as that of Irrelagh, granted at the same time to Robert Collam, certainly continued to be inhabited by the monks long afterwards. The latter abbey underwent a repair in the year 1626; and the plaster is still fresh on a part of the walls of the church of Innisfallen. Probably the monks continued in it until they were driven out by the parliamentary army.

Innisfallen island is the only one in this part of the lake which possesses a very attractive aspect. The rest are elevated but little above the surface of the water; and the few trees which spring up between the rocks are stunted. Brown or Rabbit island is the next in size to that of Innisfallen: its solitary situation, in the centre of the broadest part of the lower lake, alone renders it conspicuous; but, far from being any embellishment, it may rather be deemed injurious to the scene: it interferes very much with the prospect from the western shores of Innisfallen, by concealing the woods about the river Laune, and the bold sweep of the mountainous shore; it also diminishes the breadth and importance of the water. The aspect, however, of this island, and its general effect in the landscape, will probably be very different when the trees with which it has been lately planted are full grown. The time may come when it

will be admired for the beauty and richness of its woods ; whilst Innisfallen, if we may prognosticate from the ravages committed at Ross, stripped of its noble trees, will be passed without notice.

In crossing from Innisfallen towards the mountains, a large expanse of the lake unfolds itself to the eye, and the water displays more breadth than it does from any other position. The view of the various islands as you proceed towards Glena bay, is extremely interesting ; their shores are very intricate, and through the passages between them delightful vistas open in succession. The line of the mountainous shore, on the contrary, from Glena point to the river Laune, is remarkable for its simplicity, and forms a striking contrast to that of the islands. Glena mountain, on the side which overhangs the bay of the same name, is thickly clothed with ancient woods, which are partially seen from Innisfallen : in other parts it has no trees, except a few sapling oaks which grow among the rocks. This naked part of the mountain, at a distance, exhibits an aspect of tame uniformity, or only appears diversified by occasional variations in its hues. On approaching nearer to it, the lighter shades put on the green livery of cultivated fertility, while the more sombre ones develop extensive heaths, interspersed with rocks, and animated with innumerable herds. Here and there a solitary cottage rears its head, and enlivens the scene by the

introduction of those images that are the usual concomitants of the social abodes of man. A singularly pleasing effect, sometimes, arises from the glimmering lights which after nightfall emanate from the windows of these little habitations, and play on the surface of the lake,

. like starry light,
Which, sparkling on the silent waves, doth seem more bright.

When first I visited Killarney, innumerable lights gleamed every evening from the darkened brows of these mountains, and, being reflected and multiplied on the water, afforded a strange contrast to the solemnity of the surrounding scene, that reminded one of the fabulous description of fairy lands. They proceeded from the fires of the people who at that period were engaged in felling the trees, and in manufacturing wooden wares : for in this country, instead of bringing the wood to their established work-shops, various artificers, such as coopers, turners, carpenters, hoop-makers, &c., repair to the forest, in the summer season, and there build themselves huts, in which they reside as long as they find opportunity of providing themselves with materials for exercising their respective trades.

In coasting down the lake, under the mountains, less gratification arises from the distant prospect than from an examination of the objects on the neighbour-

ing shore. Along the water's edge, the base of the mountain near Glens point is covered with huge masses of rocks, which have fallen from the lofty pinnacles above; others, which seem dependent on a very slight support, may be observed on the heights, apparently ready to yield to the first shock, and threatening destruction to those who sail beneath. Further down the lake, the shores are more uniform, and the rocks assume a less menacing aspect. After passing for about a mile along a naked coast, a thick wood is seen, which extends from the water, a considerable way up the adjacent heights; and, on reaching its confines, a small pier, formed of rude stone, is perceived, beside a little stream, which, issuing through the trees, runs gurgling into the lake. It invites one to land: the sound of falling water soon strikes the ear; and on following a narrow path, which winds among the rocks and underwood, it is found to lead to a cascade, named after O'Sullivan, the ancient lord of the country. The cascade consists of three distinct and successive falls, each receding a few feet behind the other; but which, if viewed from a rock in the centre of the stream, being all seen in the same line, appear like one: the most considerable of them is about fifteen feet in height. From its agitation amongst rocks during its course down the sides of the mountain, the water is converted to foam, whose brilliancy and whiteness are augmented by the con-

trast of the deep gloom of impending oaks on either side of the cascade. Long before it reaches the principal fall, the stream is perceived, at a distance, sparkling through the trees ; and, in some places, it seems to gush from the very branches.

In a country less varied by the bold works of nature, this cascade would excite general admiration ; but its extent is disproportionate to the other parts of the scenery. On a mountain of such large dimensions as that of Tomies, expectation anticipates a wilder and more considerable fall of water, so that the first sight of it is often productive of disappointment ; but, during the height of summer, it is scarcely possible to conceive a more delightful retreat than this spot affords from the scorching rays which dart upon the bare rocks of the mountain.

Hic gelidi fontes——
Hic nemus——

From the woods which border upon O'Sullivan's cascade, some idea may be formed of the injuries the scenery has sustained from the destruction of the vast forests which a few years ago clothed these mountains. Amidst the general ruin, it may, indeed, be considered as an act of more than ordinary clemency, that the cascade itself was not stripped of the trees which adorn it. At Benson's point, and on some other parts of the shore, in the autumn of the year

1804, a few small groves still remained to embellish the landscape ; but preparations were then making to remove even these remnants of the mountain woods, and all of them, I fear, have already fallen.

The lake under O'Sullivan's cascade, and along the whole coast between Burnt-island and Benson's point, wears a solemn and gloomy aspect, occasioned by the deep shadows which are cast over it by the mountains, and more particularly so in calm weather, when partial lights are no longer reflected on its undulations. The water itself appears so very dark, that one would be apt to imagine it was discoloured ; nevertheless it is remarkably clear and transparent, so that bright objects may be distinguished at a considerable depth below the surface. The coast at the base of Tomies mountain is less steep and less rocky than it is under Glena ; and it gradually loses its ruggedness as it approaches to the river Laune. Between Benson's point and Pallice, the ancient family seat of Macarthy-more, it rises in an easy slope, affording, from nature, every facility for cultivation.

As the line of this coast is neither remarkable for its intricacy or variety, curiosity is soon gratified in this part of the lake. The best view it affords is one which suddenly opens on passing Benson's point, discovering, in the distance, beyond the mountain immediately bordering on the lake, the blue craggy tops of Magillicuddy's reeks.

The river Laune, which contributes so much to the beauty of the landscape, when seen from the hills, excites little interest, on a nearer approach, when beheld from the level of the lake. The entrance of the river is spacious, and has the appearance of a bay ; but it is difficult of access, owing to the numerous rocks and sand-bars. Some long poles fixed to the large rocks serve to point out the passage ; and it is soon known when a boat has got into the proper channel, for the rapidity of the stream hurries it down with a force not easily counteracted. The waters of the river Laune are peculiarly clear, and great numbers of fish may generally be seen in it, amongst which trout are most common : It is esteemed, indeed, one of the best places for angling in Killarney. At a short distance from the entrance, the banks of the river become very bold on each side ; and they preserve the same character as far as Grinagh, the seat of Major Bland : below this place they lose their extreme steepness, and then, gradually sinking, end at length in a broad open strand, over which the stream ripples, being very much dilated. The seasons occasion a very extraordinary difference in the appearance of this river ; for over these shallow places, which in summer one might almost step across, vessels of forty tons burthen, built on the banks of the lake for the navigation of the sea, are easily transported, after the lake has been swollen by rains. Every impedi-

ment to their descent is then removed, excepting that of the bridge below Dunloh, whose arches, when filled by the waters, will not admit a boat to pass, and thus occasion a temporary delay until the violence of the flood subsides. It is the opinion of engineers who have been employed to make the survey, that, with the aid of a few short canals and locks, in places where the navigation of the river is obstructed by rocks and shallows, a passage, commodious at all times, might be opened from the lake to the sea. At present the country is too poor to bear the expense of such an undertaking ; but if the mines on the borders of the lake continue to be productive, it will probably be attempted at no distant period.

The hills on the northern shore of the lake slope gradually down to the water's edge. They are cultivated, and divided by numerous enclosures, and studded with houses, whose appearance, at a distance, gives an air of liveliness to the scene ; but, on a nearer approach, the nakedness of the land is exposed to view. Many of the houses stand in open fields, without a tree or even a bush to afford them shelter ; and being whitened entirely over, the roofs not excepted, (an odious practice prevalent in many parts of Ireland) they have a cold and comfortless aspect, which reminds one of the snows of winter. Though the northern shore appears the less pleasing the nearer it is approached, it nevertheless will be found de-



Shore 86

The Rocks from Mahony's Point

sirable, in returning from the river Laune towards Ross, to keep close along it, for the sake of beholding the mountains on the opposite side of the lake, of which the spectator commands a more advantageous view the further he retires from their base. Of their general appearance some idea may be formed from the view of Mahony's point taken from the banks of the lake. The more elevated points are Magillicuddy's recks, which display a very curious and sudden break between two of the loftiest peaks; the mountain beneath them, which borders the lake, is a part of Tomies.

Mahony's point affords a considerable relief to the tameness and uniformity of the northern shore. Some large trees grow upon it, concealed amongst which there is a small lodge, occasionally occupied by the proprietor in the fishing and shooting seasons.

At a short distance from Mahony's point another long neck of land projects into the lake, which contributes to give variety and intricacy to the shores. On passing it, an extensive bay opens bounded by hills, on which are seen several gentlemen's seats, at different elevations, encircled by woods. These hills have a very charming aspect from the mouth of the bay; but, like others in the same range, when approached too closely, they cease to display those traces of cultivation and improvement which pleased at a distance. The seats which appeared to embellish

the shores are found to be situated remotely from it ; and what the eye had converted into verdant lawns before them, sloping down to the margin of the lake, proves to be a swamp overrun with furze and brambles.

Beyond this bay we again reach the flat shore in the vicinity of the river Denagh ; and here terminates our investigation of the western division of the lower lake. The eastern part, to which we next proceed, may be entered from the bay of Ross, either by passing through the narrow channel which separates Ross island from the main shore, or by going round the point of the island opposite Innisfallen : the latter route is by much the most agreeable, on account of the extent and diversity of the prospect which it commands on every side. The very striking view which opens from the point of Ross island has already been mentioned. From the point, Tomies mountain alone is seen ; but, on advancing further into the lake, and coasting along the shores of the island, Glenna mountain soon appears, displaying not only its rocks and precipices on the side which is exposed to the broad part of the lake, but likewise the extensive forests which overhang the bay. The craggy tops of the mountains of the defile leading to the upper lake next open to view ; and to the left of these appear Turk, Mangerton, and the other mountains

of the great frontier chain, gradually retiring in the distance.

The coast of Ross island, on the side which is exposed to the broad part of the lake, is still more diversified than on the opposite one which bounds the bay. Its promontories are bolder ; its bays and inlets deeper. One of the latter runs nearly across the island, and, in fact, when the water rises much above its ordinary level, communicates with Ross bay at the opposite side, and divides it into two distinct parts. The beauty of this inlet, before the woods were felled, surpassed that of every other on the confines of the lake. Its shores were then covered with majestic oaks, of which some were rooted in the clefts of steep and lofty rocks ; whilst others, growing in the low ground, near the water, dipped their branches into the very waves. In the distance, through the tufted foliage, rose the mossy towers of Ross castle ; and as the exact termination of the water was undefined, it bore the semblance of a spacious river, whose course was carried, by the imagination, beneath the very walls of the old fortress. To the eye which had never beheld this island when every promontory was adorned with full-grown trees, and every creek and inlet sheltered by an impervious skreen, its wild and naked rocks will display innumerable charms ; but to him who recollects their former lovely clothing, they now appear bleak and desolate, and awaken the most lively

regret for the melancholy change they have undergone.

In the interval between Ross and Mucruss are a multitude of islands, whose variety in size and character is almost as extensive as their numbers. Some consist of naked rocks, which, having yielded to the constant attrition of the water, now display the most fantastic forms. One, which has been undermined except in the centre, where it remains partially supported by short thick pillars, has received the name of O'Donaghoe's Table; another, from a remote resemblance to a colossal figure of a horse in the attitude of drinking, is denominated the Horse of the same legendary hero. The larger islands in the cluster are covered with thickets, which contain, in general, a profusion of evergreens. The Cow and the Rough islands are the most extensive. In the intervals between the trees, and amongst the rocks along the shores of these islands, there are small patches of coarse herbage: nor do they lie neglected; for, in the beginning of summer, cattle are regularly transported thither, as to a secure place, and left until the inclemency of the season and the deficiency of food render it necessary to provide them with better accommodation. The occasional appearance of these poor animals, rambling among the thickets, or standing on the rocks to gaze at the boats which approach their insulated territories, is extremely interesting.

Some of them seem contented with their narrow boundaries; whilst others, ill at ease, express their dissatisfaction by lowd bellowings; and, roving from time to time around the confines of their little island, appear in eager search of some means of escape.

The flat on each side of the river Flesk is the least interesting part of the boundary of the eastern division of the lake, and yet it contributes considerably to the general effect of the scenery; for when the eye, after having dwelt on it for a few minutes, turns round towards the mountains, they appear to have acquired additional height, and the woods and rocks more wildness and variety. It is covered with coarse grass, intermixed with rushes and flaggers, and terminates, at the margin of the lake, in a shelving sandy beach, which precludes the near approach of a boat.

The casual appearance of cattle is the chief source of variety along this shore :

. On the grassy bank
Some ruminating lie ; while others stand
Half in the flood, and, often bending, sip
The circling surface.

Their groups sometimes appear to great advantage, relieved by the dark oak woods of Cahirnane, which skirt a considerable part of the plain.

The coast of Mucruss, commencing at the little stream which falls into Castle lough bay, presents, as

far as the eye can reach, a chain of steep rocks thickly covered with trees, whose aspect at a distance is tame and uniform; but a near approach discovers infinite variety. The rocks exhibit the wildest irregularities. Along the peninsula they have been undermined, like those of the islands, by the attrition of the waves, so that in many places large masses have been left impending over the lake. Traces may be discovered where similar masses, deprived in the course of time of support, have fallen with their superincumbent trees. Those which fell where the water was deep were swallowed up, and are seen no more; or, if seen, appear only beneath the surface: others, which have tumbled in shallower places, form little promontories along the shore, or small islands, which are still shaded by the trees which they carried with them in their fall. The forms of these trees are unusually fanciful and picturesque; in many instances their roots appear exposed on the summit of the rocks, whilst their flourishing branches, extended along the surface of the lake, dip their quivering leaves into the water.

The mansion-house of Mucruss looks extremely well from the water, relieved by the gloomy and solemn heights of Mangerton mountain; and the lawns in its vicinity have a most delightful aspect, opening between the groves which adorn the shores. Along the peninsula, the numerous little inlets and promon-

tories keep the attention constantly awake. Some of its coves are most romantic, particularly one near Juniper island, which, being completely land-locked, and sheltered on every side from the blast by tall trees and steep rocks, has been selected as a haven for Colonel Herbert's large sailing-boats, where they ride at anchor with their masts and yards almost in contact with the branches.

At the head of another cove the curious separation of the calcareous and siliceous rocks is observable, which has been already mentioned in the description of the peninsula. One side of this cove exhibits a steep and lofty cliff of massive blue limestone, whilst the opposite one shows the deep brown stratified siliceous shelving down to the water. Towards Camillan point, the siliceous rocks lose this stratified appearance, and rise in bold and broad masses; but the eye, at a considerable distance, may trace the distinction between them and the calcareous rocks, as well by the difference of their colour as by that of their arrangement.

The last place which now remains to be described on the lower lake is the bay of Glena, which suddenly opens to view on passing round the point of Camillan. This is one of the magnificent scenes which captivates every eye, and which, if Killarney were divested of every other charm, would in itself amply compensate for the toils of traversing the dreary and

rugged country, through which alone the lake can be approached. On one side, rising from the water's edge, appears a steep mountain, from whose brow

Th' embowering forests overhang the deep;

on the opposite one a chain of low rocks surmounted with trees; and in the centre, at a distance, is seen the entrance of the defile, through which the river from the upper lake flows into the head of the bay. The length of the bay is about one English mile; its breadth nearly the same; but, owing to the numerous inlets and promontories with which the shore is indented, its extent appears considerably greater. At the base of the mountain, along the margin of the lake, the individual forms of the branching oaks are distinctly seen; but the trees which rise above these grow so closely together, that their united foliage forms an impervious and continuous shade, swelling with the protuberances of the mountain, or sinking with its glens, and interrupted alone by sudden precipices or huge projecting rocks. From the mouth of the bay to the most distant part of the horizon, along the windings of the defile, all is one sylvan scene :

Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view.

Every gradation of green is observable in these woods





during summer, from the silvery hues of the ash and willow to the deep verdure of the fir and yew ; and in autumn, when they are enriched by colours “ whose beauty cheers the approach of the inclement season they forebode,” the variety of the foliage, and the brilliant reflection of the innumerable tints upon the water, surpass all description.

Within the forest, at a short distance from the water, there is a wild path amongst the rocks, leading from the point of Glena to a cottage at the head of the bay. In following its devious course, the eye is bewildered amongst the romantic beauties of the scene, whether it penetrates into the gloomy recesses of the mountain beneath the rocky cliffs, or, from the openings on the verge of the wooded glens, surveys the distant prospect of the lake and islands. Innumerable rills fall in cascades from the mountain height, sparkling

Within the twilight of the distant shade :

these, as they descend through the forest, unite into larger streams ; and, tumbling over rocks covered with moss, and decayed trees which have fallen across their course, run foaming into the lake. The apparent wildness of this scene is not surpassed by that of the forests of America ; and its solitude might be imagined as deep, were not the dream interrupted by the appearance of a painted boat, with its gay

company, on the lake beneath, or by the sound of music reverberated from the rocks of the mountain.

From the very delightful effect of the echoes, under the wooded shores of Glenna, few parties visit this part of the lake unattended by musicians, if it is possible to procure them. I was once at Killarney with a party of ladies, who, enamoured of the charms of the scene and the effect of music on the water, were tempted to remain in the bay until midnight. The day had been sultry in the extreme ; but with night-fall a gentle breeze had arisen, just sufficient to ruffle the surface of the water. The moon at the same time was seen emerging from behind the woods, on the mountain top,

. with lessening orb
And silver aspect, climbing through the leaves
And thinner spray.

The musicians, in a separate boat, were kept at such a distance that the notes might reach the ear softened by their passage over the water, and the oars were only occasionally plied, to preserve a proper interval. The effect of music under such circumstances may be more easily conceived than described ;

The silver-sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmure of the water's fall.
The water's fall, with difference discreet,
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call ;
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

He who has never sailed along the shores of Glena by the light of the moon, nor ever listened to the dying cadence of the echoes during the stillness of the night, may be justly pronounced a stranger to the most fascinating charms of Killarney.

Painful is the task which now devolves upon me of relating that the woods of Glena, its glory and its ornament for ages, have been consigned, for a trifling consideration, to the timber-merchant. Cold must be the heart of that man, and insensible to the beauties of nature, who, conscious of their impending fate, could behold their romantic and venerable shade without heaving a sigh. Their sentence, I fear, has been inconsiderately pronounced, and hastily executed. Already had the woodmen, when last I visited Killarney, commenced their ravages; and, at the moment in which I write, Glena may mourn her denuded rocks and leafless glens.

Much, however, as the loss of these woods is to be lamented, the alteration which their removal will occasion, in the general effect of the landscape, will probably be less severely felt than that which has resulted from cutting down the woods at Ross island. The latter contributed to adorn the shores of the lake, in a part where embellishment was most wanting; and the ground upon which they grew being comparatively low, the height of the trees was fully observable; the castle of Ross also, just rising above

them, had a beautiful effect, and acquired increased dignity in the landscape, from their surrounding shade. The woods of Glena, on the contrary, being all disposed on the slope of a mountain, and so thickly interwoven that none of the stems of the trees were visible through the foliage, could scarcely be distinguished, at the distance of a mile, from a coppice-wood ; and a few years will be sufficient to produce other trees, which will conceal the nakedness of the mountain, and again exhibit, equally with those of larger growth, the variety and beauty of autumnal tints. But, on advancing into the bay of Glena, and approaching nearer to the mountain-shore, the melancholy deficiency must but too plainly be observed : it will be like entering the tenantless mansion of a departed friend, whose presence had given animation and pleasure to the now deserted scene.

The red deer still runs wild on Glena, and perpetuates its race, amidst its native woods, alike unprotected and uncontrolled by man. The liberty of the chase, which constitutes a leading object of interest at Killarney, is readily granted on the solicitations of strangers. The expense, however, which attends the indulgence, and the precariousness of its ultimate success, contribute to prevent the frequency of its recurrence. Whenever, therefore, a hunt is announced, it is expected with all that anxiety, and welcomed with all that joy, which are usually attendant

upon events calculated to gratify public curiosity, or favour idleness. Immense crowds of people never fail to appear on the appointed day; every boat on the lake is put into requisition; and if a sufficient number of vessels could be procured to convey the whole population of Killarney to the shores of Glenna, it might be apprehended that the whole town would be left destitute of inhabitants.

On the day preceding the hunt, those preparations are made which are thought best calculated to ensure it a happy issue. An experienced person is sent up the mountain to search for the herd, and watch its motions, in patient silence, till night comes on. The deer which remains the most aloof from its companions is carefully observed, and marked as the object of pursuit; and it is generally found, at the dawn of the ensuing morning, in the vicinity of the evening haunt. Before the break of day, the dogs are conducted up the mountain as silently and secretly as possible, and are kept coupled, until some signal, commonly the firing of a small cannon, announces that the party commanding the hunt has arrived in boats at the foot of the mountain. Then the dogs are loosed, and brought upon the track of the deer. If the business, previous to the signal, has been silently and orderly conducted, the report of the cannon, the sudden shouts of the hunters on the mountain, which instantly succeed it; the opening of the

dogs, and the loud and continued echoes, along an extensive region of woods and mountains, produce an effect singularly grand.

Tremble the forests round ; the joyous cries
Float through the vales ; and rocks, and woods, and hills,
Return the varied sounds.

The deer, upon being roused, generally endeavours to gain the summit of the mountains, that he may the more readily make his escape across the open heath to some distant retreat. To prevent this, numbers of people are stationed, at intervals, along the heights, who, by loud shouting, terrify the animal and drive him towards the lake. At the last hunt which I attended, a company of soldiers were placed along the mountain-top, who, keeping up a running fire, effectually deterred him from once ascending. The hunt, however, begins to lose its interest after the first burst, and the ear becomes wearied with the incessant shouts which drown the opening of the hounds, and the echoes of their mellow tones. The ruggedness of the ground embarrasses the pursuers ; the scent is followed with difficulty, and often lost altogether, or only resumed at the end of a long interval : much confusion also arises from the emulous efforts of the people on the water to follow the course of the hunt, especially if it should take a direction towards the upper lake, when the contending boats are frequently entangled among the rocks and shoals of

the river which leads to it. Those who attempt to follow the deer through the woods are rarely gratified with a view, and are often excluded from the grand spectacle of his taking the soil, or, in other words, plunging into the lake. It is therefore generally recommended to remain in a boat ; and those who have the patience to wait as long as five or six hours, are seldom disappointed. I was once gratified by seeing the deer run, for near a mile, along the shore, with the hounds pursuing him in full cry. On finding himself closely pressed, he leaped boldly from a rock into the lake, and swam towards one of the islands ; but, terrified by the approach of the boats, he returned, and once more sought for safety on the main shore : soon afterwards, in a desperate effort to leap across a chasm between two rocks, his strength failed him, and he fell exhausted to the bottom. It was most interesting to behold the numerous spectators who hastened to the spot ; ladies, gentlemen, peasants, hunters, combined in various groups around the noble victim, as he lay extended in the depth of the forest. The stag, as is usual on these occasions, was preserved from death.

Whether the red deer will long preserve their numbers, after the woods of Glena, which have hitherto afforded them such shelter, are cut, appears very questionable. For a series of years past they have continued much in the same proportion. Very few

are destroyed in the chase with which parties are indulged ; for, when the animal enters the water, as he generally does, it is easy for persons in boats to take him alive and uninjured. It appeared from the marks on the ears of the last I saw taken, that the same mischance had befallen him twice before. The day after the hunt, he was a third time, to the amusement of a large party of ladies and gentlemen, turned out of a stable at Colonel Herbert's, and liberated in Mucruss demesne ; from which place, it was presumed, he would soon escape, and, by swimming across the lake, regain his favourite abode on the side of Glena.

Some years ago the deer descended from the mountains in great numbers, swam across the river, and committed such depredations among the young plantations at Mucruss, that the proprietor of that beautiful demesne was obliged to order all the interlopers to be shot : this reception soon taught the herds to keep within the bounds of their own forests. To other dangers I have not heard of their being exposed ; even the marauders of the country, except in rare instances, are said to respect them.

The bay of Glena is remarkable for the best salmon fishery on the lake. This, and the other fisheries, are leased out at a small annual rent, under a condition that no more than two-pence a-pound shall be demanded for the produce in the town of Killarney.

All persons, however, are freely allowed to angle in the lake and in its rivers. The nets are commonly cast along a spacious inlet, just under Glena mountain, where occasionally very large draughts of fish are taken ; and, in the season, they are seldom drawn without taking some. At all entertainments on the lake, salmon forms an essential part of the feast. The men, for a small gratuity, will postpone drawing their nets till the time of dinner approaches, and an hour after the fish swims in the lake it is served at table. The mode of dressing it, in which the men display much expertness, is to divide it into pieces of moderate size, which are roasted on fresh-cut twigs of the arbutus tree, stuck in the ground before a smart fire made of dried leaves and sticks. They pretend that the arbutus wood adds considerably to the flavour of the fish ; but it is merely chosen, I believe, on account of its hardness, and the convenience of its forked shape.

The quality of salmon caught in different places varies very much, and is dependent, no doubt, upon their food, and the different nature of the waters in which they are taken, whether salt or fresh ; and also upon the distance of the rivers or lakes which they frequent from the ocean, and the facility with which they can be ascended. In the opinion of many who have had an opportunity of making a fair comparison, the preference is given, and, perhaps, with jus-

tice, to the salmon found in the lakes and rivers along the western coast ; among which that of Killarney is held in great estimation.

At the head of Glena bay, on the verge of the woods, there is a small cottage, which appears in the distance in the view of the bay. It was built as a place of entertainment by the proprietor of this part of the lake ; and is left open for the accommodation of strangers. It contains two rooms, which command very agreeable prospects of the lake, and a kitchen, the convenience of which occasions it to be frequently selected as a place for refreshment and repose.

The low shore which bounds the bay of Glena on the side next to Turk lake, is extremely beautiful, although it possesses none of those bold features which characterize the mountain. Adorned, like the other parts of the peninsula, with forest-trees, shrubs, and evergreens, all wildly intermingled, its rocky promontories and deep recesses are equally varied and numerous. The shattered rocks which lie along the coast appear, however, to have been detached from the masses to which they once adhered, not by the attrition of the waves of the lake, but rather by the percolation of water from above, and the expansion of the roots of the trees which grew between their fissures. One of the most picturesque scenes along this shore is a little wooded creek, at the head of

which, resting upon rocks, appears the single-arched bridge which connects the extremity of the peninsula with Brickeen island. Beneath the arch is seen a considerable expanse of Turk lake, with a reach of the opposite shore ; and in the distance rises Turk mountain, whose gloomy brow forms an admirable relief to the grey old walls of the bridge.

Turk lake may be entered either by the passage under this bridge, or by coasting round the shores of Dennis island, and following the course of the river which flows into Glena bay. Each entrance is very delightful ; but the latter claims the preference, on account of the more sudden and unexpected view of the lake which opens from it. The river, near the termination of its course at the bay of Glena, is sluggish, and the bank low and sedgy ; but, as you ascend, it assumes a very different character. The banks soon become steep and rugged, and the water, confined within a narrower channel, rushes with great impetuosity between the rocks.

To this great diversity is principally to be attributed the pleasing impression which the scenery of Killarney never fails to leave on the mind of every visitor. After traversing the wide expanse of the lower lake, surveying the beauties of its numerous islands, and exploring the windings of its shores, suddenly new and romantic passages open to view, which lead to other lakes, and to other scenes, still

more inviting than those which have already engaged and delighted the eye.

The view upon this river is taken from the main shore, just at the bend under Dinis island, which appears on the left. The large mountain is that of Turk. The river flows between this mountain and the woods at its base ; and at the point of land, in the centre of the picture, where the stems of the trees are visible, it divides into two branches ; one of which turns off into Turk lake, whilst the other runs towards the bay of Glena.

The branch of the river which falls into Turk lake is so narrow, that the trees upon the opposite banks almost touch. The channel is rocky and intricate ; one boat only can pass at a time, and seldom can that one be conducted through without repeated concussions. When at last it gets completely disengaged from the rocks near the mouth of the river, the current hurries it on with astonishing velocity, so that, in a few seconds, it is drifted a considerable way into the open lake. The eye, no longer restricted to the close coverts of the woods, or to the dazzling motion of the torrent, whose roar yet vibrates on the ear, can now repose in tranquillity on the placid lake, or range unconfined for miles along the distant shores. So sudden is the transition, that the wondering senses almost doubt of its reality ; and when, on turning back, no traces can be discerned of the passage by



which the boat entered, which is quickly concealed by tufts of trees, the change appears less attributable to the ordinary courses of nature than to the magic influence of the **Genius of the Lake**.

The middle, or Turk lake, is about two English miles in length, and somewhat less than one in breadth : it is bounded on the south by Turk mountain, from which it derives its name, and on the opposite side by the woods and rocks of the peninsula of Mucruss. The mountain displays little variety either in its water line or on its surface. It is marked by no bold precipices, by no glens ; and, though it rises steeply from the lake, is in most parts easy of access ; but the deep gloom which it spreads over the water at its base gives solemnity to the scene. A large tract of this mountain has been lately planted by Colonel Herbert, which, when more advanced, will diversify the surface and adorn the landscape. The improvements of the same gentleman along the eastern shore appear to much advantage from the water.

The peninsula here presents nearly the same aspect as on the side which is washed by the lower lake. Its rocks are excavated in a similar manner by the attrition of the waves ; but they have been more deeply undermined, and larger fragments of them have been detached, and precipitated into the lake. Nearly opposite to the mines, an immense mass of

rock and earth has fallen, which claims attention not less on account of its picturesque form, than the extraordinary mixture it exhibits of various mineral substances. Devil's island is also an object of curiosity; though now considerably distant from the shore, it appears evidently to have once formed a part of the peninsula.

Such striking instances of the powerful operation of the waves on this side of the peninsula, would lead to a supposition that Turk was exposed to more frequent and more violent storms than the lower lake; for the stone is nearly of the same quality. The fact, however, is directly opposite; for the same winds which disturb the former also affect the latter; whereas it frequently happens that the lower lake is much agitated when the waters of Turk remain sheltered, and present a smooth unruffled surface.

This difference cannot escape the observation of persons who continue long at Killarney. To parties who have spent the day on the peaceful waters of Turk, or on the upper lake, and who, while they observe the calm which reigns in those sheltered regions, continue unsuspecting of the effects of the wind in another quarter, it is often a source of surprise and alarm to behold the heavy waves which have arisen during their absence, rolling in the lower lake, at the base of the mountains. Sometimes they prove so boisterous, that it is found totally imprac-

ticable to repass the lake in crowded boats ; and the passengers, after landing, are obliged to regain the town by the circuitous route of the peninsula.

The hoarse sound of the water dashing amongst the rocks, the whistling of the wind through the trees, and the gloomy aspect of the mountains frowning through the clouds, contribute to give a most awful effect to the storm. To behold the lake under its influence may be desired by him who would look on nature in all the varieties of sublime disorder ; but it is only during a perfect calm that the full beauties of the scenery are displayed, when the deep shades of the mountains and the images of the rocks and trees are distinctly reflected on the glassy surface of the water.

The islands of Brickeen and Dinis, at the western extremity of Turk lake, differ alone from the peninsula in being less elevated above the water. Both are thickly covered with trees, above the tops of which are seen, at a short distance, the hanging forests of Glena ; the whole forming a sylvan scene rarely equalled in richness and variety. Dinis is one of the most delightful spots on Killarney, and is much resorted to by parties of pleasure, for whose accommodation there was formerly a neat little cottage in the centre of the island, on the borders of a lawn surrounded by woods. The materials of which it was constructed were of a very perishable nature, and af-

ter remaining for some time in a ruinous state, it was pulled down. At present there is no building on the island, except a small dwelling which is occupied by the family of a wood-ranger. On the arrival of strangers, some of the females generally appear, to welcome them to their shores, and guide them through the romantic walks of the island. Groups of children, pictures of innocence and health, also come forward, in the season, with bowls of nuts or wild strawberries, diffidently presenting their offerings, in silent expectation of some trifling reward.

The island of Dinis affords a greater diversity of prospect than any place of the same extent on the confines of Killarney. On passing round its shores, Turk lake, the bay of Glenna, and the rapid river from the upper lake, rushing in a torrent under the old weir bridge, successively open to view. The tumultuous motion of the stream amongst the rocks, and its roaring sound echoed through the woods of the island, add to the wild charms of the scene, and give coolness and freshness to the shores, which render them, during the summer season, a most delightful retreat.

The rapidity of the current under the old weir bridge, forms an impediment to the ascent of boats not to be counteracted without considerable efforts, and never fails to occasion much delay in proceeding to the upper lake. To render the boats more ma-

nageable, the passengers are always required to land, and walk through the woods till they get above the bridge ; and, even after being thus lightened, it requires the united strength of nine or ten men to drag a large boat against the stream. When the water is low, as it commonly is during the dry months of summer, the force of the current is more easily counteracted ; but the channel is then so intricate, owing to the shallowness of the water, that the boats frequently become fastened, and can only be disengaged by being lifted over the ledges of rocks, for which purpose the men are obliged to go into the water. In descending the stream during floods, and shooting through the bridge, coolness and dexterity are no less requisite than vigour and perseverance were during the ascent.

The bridge consists of two arches, of which one alone affords a passage for boats ; the other is obstructed by a wall, built across the stream from the central pier to the shore.* It was intended formerly as part of a fishing weir, and is now left for the purpose of deepening the channel at the opposite side.

Accidents have frequently occurred here during floods. The following narration of one which happened a few years ago was communicated to me by a relation of my own, who was a participator in the

* See the vignette on the first page.

danger and escape. Returning at the close of day, with a numerous company, from the shores of the upper lake, a gentleman of the party, in a moment of frolic, undertook to steer through the rapid. Not having directed the boat, in time, into the proper channel, it became ungovernable; and being hurried towards the obstructed arch, was almost instantaneously drifted by the irresistible impetuosity of the torrent, upon the top of the wall then covered with water. In that situation it remained suspended for some time, yielding alternately from side to side to the preponderating power of the flood, and in imminent danger each moment of being overwhelmed. The critical and perilous situation of those who remained in it was seen by their companions on shore; but to relieve them was impossible. In the meantime, the position of the boat was gradually altered by the force of the current; and at last, being suddenly swept off, it was dashed with violence against the central pier. The side was beaten in with a terrible crash, and the oars and poles shivered to pieces. Efforts were now made to relieve the sufferers; who, abandoning through terror the exertions calculated to obtain safety, had prostrated themselves on their knees in despair. Handkerchiefs were lowered from the parapet of the bridge, and the branches of the neighbouring trees bent down for their support; but before their utility could be tried, the boat righted;

and, being torn through the obstructed arch, where never boat had passed before, floated without further injury to the shores of Dinis.

I was told of another boat having been overset in passing through this bridge, with two men, both of whom instantly disappeared, and were not seen again until they rose in Turk lake. One of them, a negro, soon recovered the shock, and, being an excellent swimmer, regained the shore in safety ; but the other had suffered so much from concussions against the rocks, that he was rendered quite senseless, and in that state was drifted by the current on the beach of Dinis island. He was fortunately discovered before it was too late, and, by continued and well-applied exertions, was restored to life.

At a short distance above the weir bridge the stream appears quite placid, and in general it maintains this character throughout its course from the upper lake, except in a few places where the channel is contracted between rocks, or obstructed by bars and shoals. When not flooded, its ordinary breadth seldom exceeds fifteen yards ; but occasionally it expands to upwards of one hundred, whilst, at some of the passes between the rocks, it is so narrow as not to admit of more than one boat at a time. Its course is very devious : sometimes running for a considerable distance close to the mountains, under immense masses of rocks ; sometimes meandering through the

centre of the defile, or dividing into branches, which, after enclosing numerous little islands, unite again. The scenery throughout is of the most picturesque description, and highly varied, although there is but little difference in the distance ; for on that part of the river which lies above the Eagle's Nest, the prospects looking downwards are invariably bounded by Turk mountain, and, in the opposite direction, by the great mountains beyond the upper lake.

These mountains, which rise on each side of the defile, or valley through which the river takes its course, are not of great elevation ; and, with the exception of the one known by the name of the Eagle's Nest, are not distinguished either for the gracefulness or boldness of their outline : but the great diversity and wildness of their surface are inexhaustible sources of gratification, which keep the eye constantly engaged during the whole passage from the old weir bridge to the upper lake. They display immense precipices, and deep glens overhung with woods ; each glen affords a channel to a mountain stream, and each stream supplies a cascade. Many of these falls appear with inconceivable beauty sparkling through the trees which shade their gloomy recesses ; whilst the existence of others is only known by the sound of their gushing waters.

Now tumbles o'er some rock their crystal pride ;
 Sonorous now they roll adown the glade,
 Now plaintive tinkle in the secret shade.

J.W. del.

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Engraved by Snow.



From the old weir bridge to the upper lake the distance is about three English miles. The defile, strictly speaking, only commences at the Eagle's Nest ; for between this place and the bridge there is an extensive tract of low swampy ground, stretching from the banks of the stream to the foot of Glena mountain. Along the bottom of the defile the ground in general is of the same description ; but there are several elevated spots, yielding a coarse herbage, which the husbandman does not deem unworthy of his care, and they are annually mown. Seldom, however, do the floods with which the valley is liable to be overwhelmed allow him to enjoy the fruits of his labour without many disappointments. The hay is commonly removed several different times before it can be brought home ; and frequently it receives so much injury as ultimately to be totally unfit for use. I once counted upwards of fifty large stacks of hay, which had been made on the banks of the river, very nearly covered with water. The valley is much better adapted to pasturage ; and numerous herds of cattle are fed in it, whose varied groups contribute to the rural charms of the scene, some cooling themselves in the little pools which spread between the rushes ; others reposing on the grassy banks ; while many, of a more intractable and rambling disposition, may be descried on the very summit of the mountains :

Who rove o'er bog and heath, and graze or browse
 Alternate to collect, with due dispatch,
 O'er the bleak wild, the thinly-scatter'd meal.

The lowing of these animals occasionally produces the most astonishing effect, owing to the numerous echoes, for which the place is distinguished above every other part of Killarney.

The most remarkable object on the river is a lofty cliff, called the Eagle's Nest ; so designated from an eyry situated on one of its projecting rocks, which has been annually frequented by the eagle during time immemorial. Well may it be styled

. . . his fort, the towering seat
 For ages of his empire, which in peace
 Unstain'd he holds, while many a league to sea
 He wings his course, and preys in distant isles.

The exact position of the eyry is curiously marked by a horizontal fissure, which resembles a pair of large extended wings. During the breeding season, the birds may occasionally be seen from the river ; and, if alarmed by shouts or by firing a gun, they will launch themselves into the air, and will continue hovering about the rock at an immense height. It has not been satisfactorily ascertained to what particular species the eagle which frequents this rock belongs. By some it has been asserted that the osprey, or fishing eagle, is the only one known in Ireland ; but

amongst the mountains of Kerry I have myself remarked several kinds, particularly one of a very dark brown, and another of an ash colour. From descriptions that have been received, it is probable that the golden eagle has also been seen in the south of Ireland. The fishing eagle is by much the most common ; and on the sea-coast, where there are large shoals of fish, he may be generally observed very actively employed. He is easily distinguishable among the large flocks of different sea-fowl, by his heavy wing, superior size, and strong flight, and also by his mode of fishing, which varies from that of the web-footed tribes. The latter take the fish in their beaks, and devour them upon the water ; whereas the eagle always strikes with his talons, and, having secured his prey, hastens to some rock to enjoy his repast. Eagles are very commonly seen on the small islands of the lower lake, particularly on some which abound with rabbits, watching for their prey ; and on a calm day, being unwilling to take wing, owing to the difficulty which they then experience in mounting into the air, they exhibit all the appearance of tameness and familiarity, and will suffer a person to approach within a very short distance. Notwithstanding the eager endeavours of the people of the country to destroy them, in consequence of the great depredations they commit amongst lambs and poultry, particularly during the breeding season, when their rapacity is inordinate,

the number of these birds is supposed to be increasing in Kerry.

The cliff called the Eagle's Nest forms a termination to a short range of mountains, which runs in a direction across that of the stream. These mountains are visible from the bay of Glena, and from the opposite shores of the lower lake ; but the wild grandeur of the cliff, its immense rocks, and graceful pendent woods, are not distinctly perceived, owing to the obstructions along the banks of the river, at a greater distance than two hundred yards. The prospect suddenly opens on passing a small promontory, and discloses to view a huge pile of rocks rising in a pyramidal form :

. . . A cliff to heaven up piled,
Of rude access, of aspect wild ;
Where tangled round the jealous steep
Strange shades o'erbrow the valley deep.

The water is considerably dilated at its base ; and, being securely sheltered, it generally presents a dark and glassy surface, on which the rocks and woods are beautifully reflected. Towards the summit of the pile, the rocks in many places have been disjoined and split into small fragments, by the constant and powerful action of the weather ; but lower down they present a broad perpendicular surface, not unlike the bulwarks of some mighty fortress. Oak, birch, and ash trees clothe the base of the cliff, forming a dense



shade, interrupted alone by the masses of grey rocks which obtrude their craggy heads through the foliage ; and even to the very summit of the pile, scattered trees, of slender growth, spring from the fissures of the rock, dependent, seemingly, upon the stone itself for nourishment.

The Eagle's Nest is represented in the engraving as it appears from the opposite bank, about one hundred yards higher up the stream ; from which position it is seen as it were in profile, the range of mountains of which it forms a part being concealed. The river flows from the left, winds round the cliff, and loses itself behind the dark rocks on the right ; and in the distance appears a gloomy vale, one of those ill-fated spots,

Which, circled round with a gigantic heap
Of mountains, never felt, nor ever hopes
To feel, the genial influence of the sun.

It is scarcely in the power of language to convey an adequate idea of the extraordinary effect of the echoes under this cliff, whether they repeat the dulcet notes of music, or the loud discordant report of a cannon. Enchantment here appears to have resumed her reign, and those who listen are lost in amazement and delight.

To enjoy the echoes to the utmost advantage, it is necessary that a band of musicians should be placed on the banks of the river, about fifty yards below the

base of the cliff, and at the same side ; while the auditors, excluded from their view, seat themselves on the opposite bank, at some distance above the cliff, behind a small rocky projection. Were a stranger conducted hither ignorant of this arrangement, and unprepared by any previous description for the illusory effect of the echo, I am persuaded he would be unable to form a tolerable conjecture as to the source of the sounds, or the number of the instruments. The primary notes are quite lost, whilst those which are reverberated meet the ear increased in strength, in brilliancy, and in sweetness. Sometimes it might be supposed that multitudes of musicians, playing upon instruments formed for more than mortal use, were concealed in the caverns of the rock, or behind the trees on different parts of the cliff ; at others, when a light breeze favours the delusion, it seems as if they were hovering in the air. At intervals the treble sounds of flutes and clarionets,

In sweet vibrations thrilling o'er the skies,

are alone heard ; and then again, after a short suspension,

The clanging horns swell their sweet winding notes,
 and load the trembling air
 With various melody.

But notwithstanding the occasional swell and predominance of certain instruments, the measure of the

melody is not impaired, nor do the notes come confusedly to the ear : the air which is played should, however, be very slow, and the harmony simple, affording a frequent repetition of perfect chords.

When the music has subsided, whilst every auditor still remains in a state of breathless admiration, it is usual to discharge a cannon from the promontory opposite to the cliff, which never fails to startle and to stun the ear, ill prepared as it must be for the shock, after dwelling upon the sweet melody which has preceded it. The report of the gun produces a discordant crash, as if the whole pile of rocks were rent asunder ; and the succeeding echoes resemble a tremendous peal of thunder. During a favourable state of the atmosphere, upon which much depends, twelve reverberations, and sometimes more, may be distinctly counted ; and what appears extraordinary, after the sound has been totally lost, it occasionally revives, becomes louder and louder for a few seconds, and then again dies away :

Now seems it far and now anear,
Now meets, and now eludes the ear ;
Now seems some mountain's side to sweep,
Now dies away in valley deep.

“ Here,” says Mr Ockenden,* “ we again rested on our oars to mark the flight of numerous eagles (the

* Letters from Killarney, published 1767.

chief inhabitants of these lofty regions,) which was slow, solemn, and very high, to view the marble* chasm in the perpendicular side of the mountain, in which they had formed their nests, and to admire the many noble objects which presented themselves on every hand, in this stupendous scene; when suddenly, to our inexpressible amazement, we were surprised with music sweeter than I had ever heard before, which seemed to rise from the rock at which we gazed, and, breaking upon us in short melodious strains, filled the very soul with transport.

“ Angels from the sky, or fairies from the mountain, or O’Donaghoe from the river, was what we every moment expected to appear before us; but after a quarter of an hour’s fixed attention, all our raptures were dispersed by a clap of thunder most astonishingly loud, which, bursting from the same direction whence the music had lately seemed to flow, rent the mountain with its roar, and filled us with the apprehension of being instantly buried in a chaos of wood, hill, and water. But the horror was as suddenly dissipated by the return of the soothing strain which had before entranced us.

“ The second music, which immediately succeeded the thunder, seemed more soft and lulling than the first; but our elysium was very short, being soon

* Quartz was mistaken for marble.

lost in another clap, still louder than that which had preceded it, and which burst suddenly upon us, again awaking us to terror : when lo ! a third return of music, superlatively sweet indeed, restored our senses and reinstated our hearts. It lasted some time, and a most solemn silence ensued. We waited now, motionless and awe-struck, for what wonders might follow next in this region of enchantment. We gazed at the wood, the rock, the mountain, and the river, with alternate hope and fear ; hope, while the music dwelt on our thoughts ; and fear, while we remembered the thunder : and we expected, with pleasing impatience, some marvellous event. In vain : no angel appeared to delight our eyes ; no dæmons to alarm us with new terrors ; no O'Donaghoe to gratify our curiosity."

When their Excellencies the Earl and Countess of Hardwicke visited Killarney, during the summer of the year 1802, an officer of a ship of war cruising on the western coast, conveyed two pieces of cannon, of large calibre, in a king's boat, up the river Laune ; an enterprise that was pronounced impracticable until it was performed. The crew remained encamped, for some weeks, on the island of Innisfallen ; and the guns were repeatedly fired on different parts of the lake. That the echoes would have been proportionate to the strength of their report was a natural expectation ; but, whether attributable to the prejudice

of the inhabitants of the country in favour of what they were habituated to, or to the peculiarly unfavourable state of the atmosphere at the time of the trial, it was the concurrent opinion that the report of the ship guns was not attended either with as loud or as numerous echoes as that of the small pieces in ordinary use loaded with a few ounces of powder.

The generality of persons who visit Killarney have no opportunity of judging of the effect of musical sounds at the Eagle's Nest, or on other parts of the lake, as the only musicians who reside on the spot are two wretched performers on the French horn and bugle. Having been fortunate enough myself, each time that I visited Killarney, to be associated with parties who could command the services of a select military band, I can speak from experience of the superior advantage to be derived from a number of instruments. The simple notes of the bugle alone are indeed pleasing, but the wonders of the echo consist in the distinct repetition of a combination of sounds. A barrel organ would probably prove the best substitute for a band, and be well adapted to the place : no such instrument has ever yet been brought upon the lake, though one or more would afford a certain livelihood to the proprietors : but when the people of the town are so blind to their own interest as to have neglected the attainment of many of the ordinary conveniences of life for the accommodation

of strangers, it is not surprising that they are badly provided with music.

The devious course of the river above the Eagle's Nest, and the numerous impediments which commonly arise from rocks, shoals, and the rapidity of the current, are productive of repeated disappointment, and excite no small degree of impatience in those who anticipate the view of the romantic confines of the upper lake. The long-wished-for scene is expected to open at every turn ; but one short reach of the river succeeds to another, terminated by huge rocks, beyond which nothing is visible but distant mountains. At length the boat arrives in a little basin, bounded for the most part by steep rocks, to which several different outlets appear. The stranger naturally concludes that one to be the proper channel which is the widest, and whose direction accords best with the course of the river : it is not without surprise, therefore, that he beholds the oars, after a few strong and rapid strokes, drawn in, and the boat suddenly put about, and directed through a narrow pass between the rocks, barely sufficient for its admission. This is the entrance to the upper lake ; and, soon after passing it, the most distant shores are revealed to view, with the immense mountains which rise beyond them.

The pass goes by the name of Coleman's eye, and is so called, it is said, after a legendary hero of that

name, who, in the eagerness of the chase, or in pursuit of an enemy, having leaped across the stream at this place, left the impression of his foot on the rock where he alighted ; a miracle minutely described and studiously exaggerated by the credulous guides.

The upper lake is situated in the midst of a stupendous amphitheatre of mountains, and displays the most wild and romantic scenery. Its length is nearly the same as that of Turk, its breadth somewhat inferior. The mountains which bound it on each side are a continuation of those of the defile, and are characterized by similar features ; but they are much loftier, and their parts are all on a grander scale : the glens are deeper ; the woods more extensive, and of older growth ; the rivers larger ; and the falls more lofty and precipitate. The mountains situated at the upper extremity of the lake are the most elevated, as well as the most varied in their outline ; amongst which Magillicuddy's reeks rise pre-eminent in grandeur above all the rest. These mountains are visible from the lower lake ; but their appearance on this side is so very different, that they would scarcely be recognised for the same. Instead of an assemblage of conical peaks, they here display a long craggy ridge, which seems to be reduced like a wedge to a very narrow breadth, at the summit ; and, on ascending, it is found not to be less narrow than it appears from below. Their height is about three thousand



feet, and they are seldom unobscured by clouds; a circumstance which contributes to render their aspect, at times, peculiarly sublime.

On entering the upper lake, the attention is at first wholly engaged by the vastness of the mountains; and next by the extreme wildness and ruggedness of the scene. The numerous islands, as well as the shores, present on every side immense rocks; some bleak and terrific; others, of a less savage aspect, teeming with vegetable life. Several of the islands, though apparently solid masses of stone, are covered with a profusion of trees, and abound with evergreens, amongst which the arbutus predominates.

This tree flourishes on every part of the shores of Killarney; but it attains a larger size, and is found in greater abundance, in the woods of Glenna mountain, and on the islands of the upper lake, than elsewhere. As a single tree it is not picturesque; but, associated with others, the fine mellow green of its leaves gives variety and richness to the masses of foliage, particularly after the leaves of the deciduous trees are suffused with brown and yellow tints. Its clustered berries, which, when ripe, resemble large scarlet strawberries, have a very pretty appearance, as they hang drooping over the dark rocks; but one cannot submit with patience to hear them mentioned as essential ornaments to the scenery of Killarney. Their beauty, nevertheless, is extolled in every de-

scription of the lake ; and on the spot we are told, with ill-timed exultation, that the proprietor of the woods, unwilling to strip the landscape of every embellishment, has generously ordered that all the arbutus trees should remain untouched. Grateful would it have been to the admirers of woodland scenery, if a few of the venerable oaks of Glena had been spared in their stead.

The rocks along the shores of the islands of the upper lake are of a remarkably dark colour, which agrees so nearly with the reflections of overshadowing trees in the water, in calm weather, that the line of separation cannot be traced without difficulty. At the western extremity of the lake the islands form a cluster, among which that called Ronayn's appears conspicuous, from its superior size, and from a cottage which has been lately erected as a place of entertainment. On the appearance of strangers, an old couple, to whom the care of the island has been intrusted, generally put off from the opposite shore in a little skiff, to welcome their arrival and open the doors of the building. A gravel walk, commencing at the landing, passes before the door of the cottage, and, winding round the rocks, leads to a sort of natural terrace on the summit of the island, which is nearly forty feet above the level of the water. No powers of language are adequate to convey an idea of the wildness and variety of the view which opens





from this spot. The lake is seen in all its intricate windings studded with islands, and bounded by immense mountains,

With woods o'erhung and sha g'd th mossy rock,
Whence, on each hand, the gushing waters play,
And down the rough cascades white dashing fall,
Or gleam in lengthen'd vistas through the trees.

Not a single habitation, not a trace of man's labour, can be discovered in any part of this vast amphitheatre.

Such romantic solitudes are not less calculated to delight the eye of the enthusiastic admirer of the wild beauties of simple nature, than to favour the meditations of the sage :

. for wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, contemplation,
She plumes her feathers and lets grow her wings.

It is scarcely possible, indeed, to enter the confines of this sequestered and enchanting region without feeling the influence of a spell, which abstracts the mind from the noise and folly of the world, and banishes, for the moment, the desire of returning to the gay and busy scenes of human life. So powerful are its effects, that instances are not wanting of persons, who, on first coming hither, have fondly resolved to retire to these distant shades ; and who, with the permission of the proprietors of the shores, have

actually determined on the precise position of their intended retreats. But, as if the spell was liable to be dissolved when the mountains of Killarney faded from view, or, as if a temporary absence from the habitual enjoyments of the pleasures of social life served but to render a return to them the more agreeable, these visionary schemes have been generally abandoned on withdrawing from the scenes which gave them birth. One man, however, there was, upon whose romantic mind a deeper impression was made : he was an **E**nglishman, of the name of Ronayn. The spot which he selected for his retreat was this small island, which yet retains his name ; and, when first I visited Killarney, the ruins of his little habitation, planted in the midst of rocks very near the water, were still visible. They inspired one with a respect for the place ; nor was it possible to contemplate them without falling into a train of reflection upon the variety of sentiments entertained by men about happiness, that invariable object of eager and hourly pursuit. The mind was also led to consider how little was actually wanting to supply the real necessities, even of a man who had from infancy, perhaps, been habituated to the comforts and conveniences of civilized life. Surely the spot should have been held sacred, as long as a fragment of the habitation remained visible : but the spirit of improvement, as it is often so falsely styled, has swept away every ves-

tige of Ronayn's cottage ; and the mossy rocks, where he was wont to seat himself before it, have given place to the trim surface of a smooth shorn grass plot.

Of the motives which induced this gentleman to withdraw from the world, whether they arose from an innate love of retirement, from disappointment in his pursuits, or from

Strokes of adversity no time can cure,
No lenient hand can soften or assuage,

or whether they arose from his experience of the insufficiency of the ordinary pleasures and luxuries of life to afford permanent satisfaction, it has never fallen within my power to learn. He avoided all society ; and seldom left the island except to partake of his favourite amusements of shooting or fishing, by which he procured his chief sustenance. Thus singular in his habits, he became exposed to the eye of curiosity : and, offended at frequent and impertinent intrusion, his jealousy of the approach of strangers sometimes betrayed itself in acts of savage moroseness ; nevertheless, his name is still mentioned at Killarney with respect, nay even with admiration.

The shores of the upper lake are extremely intricate, being indented by numerous wooded and rocky promontories, by bays, inlets, and long creeks, which wind towards the base of the mountains, as if pur-

· posely to receive the streams which rush through the glens, and conduct their waters in silence and tranquillity to the lake. Of these inlets, the largest and most beautiful is that called Newfoundland, at the eastern extremity of the lake. The entrance into it lies through a narrow pass defended by two vast perpendicular rocks ; on passing which an extensive basin suddenly opens to view, bearing the appearance of a fourth lake. On the right of this inlet rises a steep overshadowing cliff, clothed with straggling trees ; masses of bleak rocks bound it on the opposite side, and in the centre appears a wood of oaks, out of which issues a river accessible for some way in a boat. An irregular path winds along its banks, between trees where thick foliage confines the view, until, at the end of about half a mile, a space suddenly opens, discovering some cottages surrounded by a few small enclosures. The sound of falling water now strikes the ear ; and, on turning the eye towards the mountain, a beautiful cascade is seen over the trees at the head of a deep glen. It is scarcely in the power of imagination to conceive a more romantic retreat. No vestige of human industry appears beyond the precincts of this little hamlet ; woods and mountains surround it ; and the inhabitants seem totally cut off from the society of their fellow-creatures. Nor is the retreat less remote in reality from the busy scenes of life than it appears to be : the plough has

never left the traces of its furrows on this vale ; the soil is turned with the spade ; and the produce, if more than sufficient for the maintenance of the humble cultivators, is conveyed away on horses, by a craggy path which winds along the borders of the stream.

The inlet which receives the river of Derricunnihy under the Coffin point, also displays a very wild and romantic scene. The cascade on this river, both in beauty and in size, far exceeds every other on the confines of Killarney. From the lake it lies concealed, being situated in the depths of a thick wood ; neither can it be approached without much difficulty, owing to the numerous rocks and thick entangled underwood. The water, where it is first seen, gushes out between two rocks at a great height up the mountain ; and, after falling about thirty feet, spreads to a wide extent on each side, sparkling between the foliage and the stones, so that each tree and each rock seems to yield a living spring. These innumerable rills unite again, and are collected in a basin deeply excavated in the rock ; from which, making a second sudden descent through a contracted channel, the water falls in a sheet of white foam, and loses itself in the woods below, where it again falls, and rushes on through a rocky channel into the lake.

The view, in which the reeks appear capped with

clouds, is taken from the head of this inlet, near the Coffin point.

To enter into a description of every bay and inlet, of every glen and cascade, on this delightful and romantic lake, would only fatigue the reader. The powers of language are inadequate to give an exact notion of such scenes. Rocks, woods, mountains, rivers, distinctly as the imagination may paint them, yet in reality will generally be found to present a very different aspect from the conceptions which were formed from a mere verbal description. The assistance of the pencil is absolutely necessary to convey any thing like an accurate notion of them ; but it was found incompatible with the plan of this work to insert a greater number of engravings.

It has often been a question, which of the three divisions of the lake of Killarney was the most interesting ; and opinions have been very much divided on the subject. To those who delight in landscapes of a wild and romantic cast, in the gloomy mountain and hollow glen, the upper lake will unfold scenery unrivalled by any on the other divisions, or perhaps in any other part of the island. But its shores display none of those extraordinary contrasts which are observable on the lower lake between the verdant lawn and rugged heath, the graceful grove and entangled forest—all is one continued scene of savage



wildness. To hazard an opinion, says an anonymous writer, the prevailing character of Killarney is variety, the second, beauty ; magnificence is subordinate.

If these attributes were to be divided amongst the three lakes, whatever there is of magnificence in the scene, might, perhaps, be allotted with propriety to the upper lake, on account of the height and grandeur of the adjacent mountains. Things are great or small only by comparison ; and although the mountains of Kerry, compared with those of Switzerland, which the anonymous writer appears to have had in view, sink very low in the scale, yet the reeks, owing to their contiguity to the lake, produce a more sublime effect than loftier mountains would do in a less favourable situation.

It has also been a question, which of the three lakes was the most picturesque ; and if this was to be determined by the views which are commonly selected by artists, the far greater numbers which are drawn from the scenery of the great lower lake would at once determine the point. But the facility of visiting this part of Killarney, and of procuring subjects for the pencil, may, perhaps, in some measure, account for the prevailing choice. The remoteness of the upper lake, and the difficulty of getting to it, the uncertainty of the climate, and the want of accommodation on its confines, preclude most strangers from examining it thoroughly. It is only indeed by a

patient walk around the shores, and by pursuing the courses of the creeks and inlets, that all its beautiful varieties can be discovered ; and this is a task of considerable labour, for the ways are rugged and the streams deep. The scenery of the upper lake is, however, all of a close description, deriving its chief interest from the diversity of the fore-grounds and middle distance. The mountains which terminate the view on every side, afford neither a very graceful outline, nor one of much variety. As the lower lake is beheld to most advantage under a serene sky, and about the hour of sunset, when the peaks in the extensive chain of mountains which extend towards the bay of Dingle, are seen gradually receding behind each other, fainter and fainter, till they are lost in the blaze of the departing luminary ; so, on the contrary, a gloomy day, with a mist sufficient to give obscurity and apparent distance to the adjacent mountains, might be esteemed the most propitious circumstance at least for a first view of the upper lake.

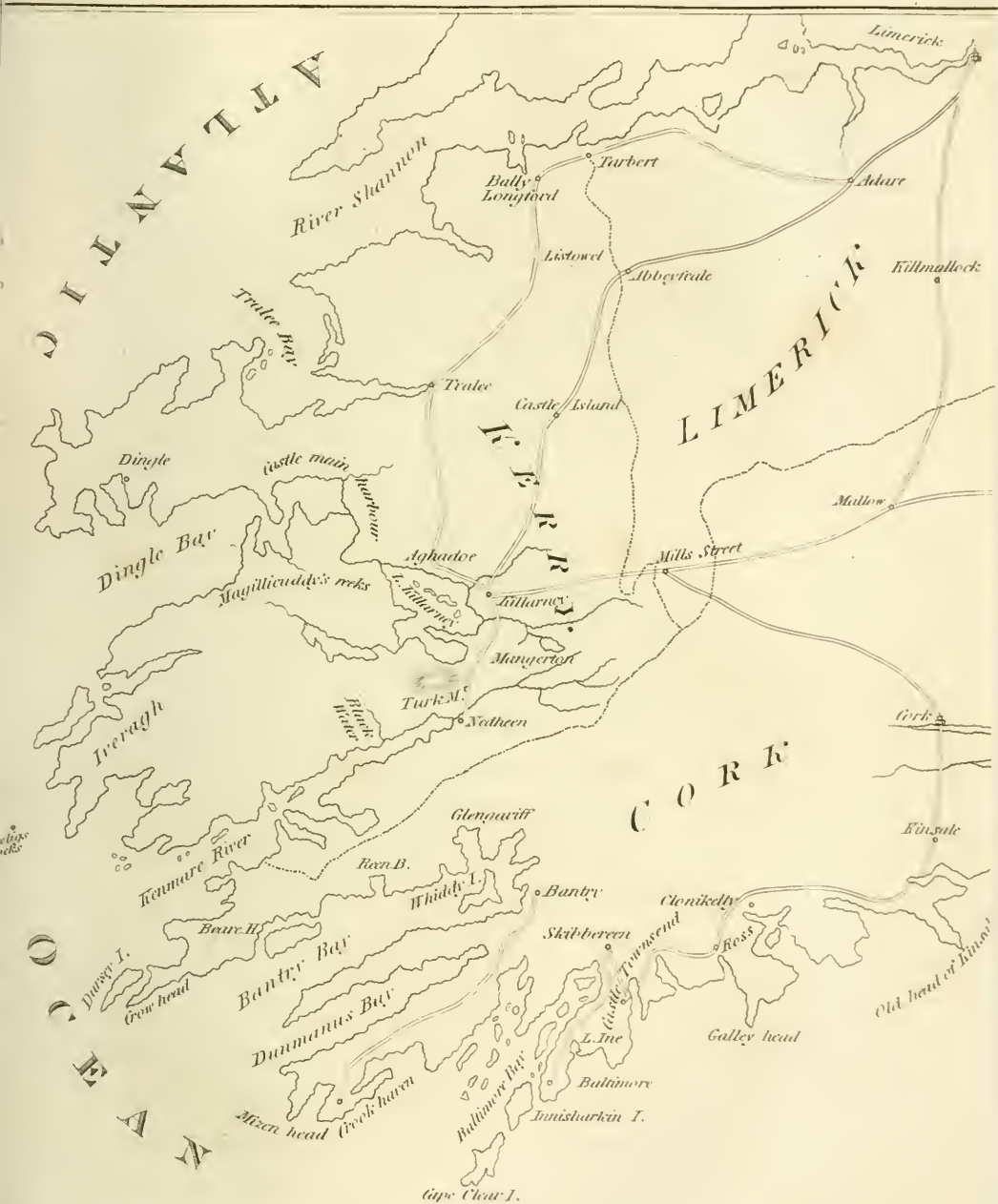
Before this part of the subject is brought to a conclusion, I cannot refrain from expressing my conviction that no one of the celebrated lakes, whether in the north of England or in Scotland, will stand the test of a comparison with Killarney. Those who have thoroughly examined the lakes of both countries, will not, I trust, deem this to be either a hasty

or a partial judgment. There are unquestionably single features in several of the lakes of Great Britain which are superior to any of the same nature in Killarney, just as the islands of the latter must be allowed to maintain a proud pre-eminence over those of any of the other lakes in these countries; but, if examined individually in all their bearings, I venture to think that a doubt can scarcely be entertained about placing Killarney first in the scale. If, however, we were to extend our view beyond the mere confines of the lake, if we were to consider in which country an imaginary boundary of twenty or thirty miles on each side might be drawn, so as to include the more beautiful and interesting space, Killarney being comprised within one, in that case I apprehend that a district might be described in the north of England to which a decided preference would be given. In Scotland, such a boundary would, I presume, be drawn so as to include Loch-Lomond, or, at least, a great part of it, Loch-Con, Loch-Ard, and the lower part of Loch-Katrine: In England, the head of Windermere and Derwent water, in one direction, and in another, Coniston, Paterdale, and the head of Ulswater.

Much more might be said on this subject; but I fear that I have already more occasion to apologize for redundancies than to ask indulgence for omissions. Here then I take leave of the lake.

SECTION III.

MAGILLICUDDY's reeks are generally supposed to be the most lofty mountains in Ireland ; although their exact height does not appear to have been ascertained. The celebrated Mr Kirwan made several barometrical observations both on them and on other mountains in the vicinity of Killarney ; from which he concluded, as he informed me, that the reeks were at least three thousand feet in height : but at the same time he added, that his experiments were not sufficiently numerous fully to satisfy his own mind on the subject. A gentleman resident near Killarney gave me, from memory, a computation of their height, derived from a different source ; according to which, their most elevated point was only one hundred and fifty feet lower than Snowdown. The latter mountain is somewhat less than six hundred fathoms high ; pursuant to the most generally received calculation, three thousand five hundred and sixty-eight feet. This measurement, therefore, would leave the height of the reeks at three thousand four hun-



dred and eighteen feet, which rather exceeds what Mr Kirwan supposed it to be : I suspect, however, that that gentleman did not direct his observations to the most lofty point. He told me it was his practice to remain below, on one of the islands in the lake, whilst his assistant ascended the mountain ; and that they corresponded from time to time by means of signals and telescopes. Now on Gheraun-tuel, the highest peak, this would have been impracticable, as no part of it is visible from the lake. I should suppose that this mountain rises at least two hundred feet above the other peaks.

Being in company with some friends, who, like myself, were desirous of ascending the most lofty mountain in the country, we procured guides for that purpose ; and, under their direction, crossed the lower lake to Benson's point, where we landed. From this place we proceeded to Dunloh gap, and, having advanced into it to the distance of half a mile, began to ascend the mountain on our right hand. It proved extremely difficult of access, and in many parts so steep, that, without the aid of the sapling oaks which spring from their fissures, it would have been impossible to scale the rocks. On the summit of this mountain we found an extensive tract of ground, less encumbered with rocks than the valley below, and covered, as far as the eye could see, with heath and coarse grass, on which innumerable herds of cattle

were fed. Beyond it appeared another mountain extremely rugged, which we reached at the end of two hours. The ascent was not steep ; but it was laborious and tedious, owing to the immense heaps of loose stones in some places, and the deep rents in the rocks in others ; which last could not be passed without the utmost caution. Along this part of the route the only animals we observed were eagles, of which numbers hovered above us, as if alarmed at the invasion of their lofty solitudes : at one moment we counted no less than twelve of them within gun-shot.

The craggy tops of the reeks appeared on reaching the summit of this latter mountain ; and after walking for about an hour over a rugged way, nearly similar to that which we had already traversed, we gained one of their loftiest pinnacles, which our guides told us was Gheraum-tuel.

It is scarcely possible to convey an idea of the sublime view which was now unfolded to our eyes. On each side lay a vast precipice, beyond which arose other immense mountains : still further on we saw the Atlantic ocean bounding the horizon for a great distance ; and, in the opposite direction, a wide expanse of the inland country, watered by innumerable rivers and lakes, amongst which that of Killarney was only conspicuous for its superior extent. One of the peaks before us seemed to be considerably more lofty than that which we had ascended ; but the guides

persisted in assuring us that the appearance was deceptive ; and that if from any third station we could compare its elevation with that of the point on which we then stood, the superior height of the latter would be obvious. The intervening precipices were impassable ; as it was out of our power, therefore, to make the trial, we were satisfied to receive this intelligence as conviction ; and perhaps none of us, after so much fatigue, were willing to entertain a doubt of having attained the object of our laborious undertaking.

The mountain which we had ascended resembled the shape of a wedge ; and, at the summit, presented a long craggy ridge, so narrow, that, whilst we stood upon it, we could look into the depths of the precipices at either side, or drop pebbles into them from each hand at the same moment. The ridge consisted, for the most part, of sharp siliceous rocks, seated on sloping layers or strata of soft argillaceous schistus and sandstone, which are both very liable to decomposition ; and as these latter substances are mouldered away by the incessant action of the mists and vapours which prevail in these high regions of the air, the siliceous rocks become undermined : we found several of them apparently ready to fall on the first shock. Fortunately there are no habitations within their reach, or the mischief to be apprehended from their descent would be truly alarming. From the guides who accompanied us we learned that large

masses of rocks frequently rolled down the mountain after the snow began to dissolve. Their effect was described as extremely awful ; whole herds of cattle being sometimes overwhelmed by their fall. From these circumstances it is obvious that the height of the reeks must be gradually decreasing.

During our progress we overturned several loose stones on the edge of the precipice, where no danger was to be apprehended from their fall. In their course downwards they carried with them many of larger size ; and presently we could distinguish a huge heap in motion at a vast distance below us. It was at first a source of surprise that no noise was heard from the mutual concussions of these ponderous masses, when they could so plainly be perceived tumbling down the sides of the mountain ; but in a few seconds it was dispelled by a sudden and tremendous crash like the roar of thunder, which was echoed for a long time from mountain to mountain ; and, after the sound had gradually died away in the upper regions, it a second time burst from the depths of the abyss.

The large rocks of this mountain are formed of a *grauwacke*, similar to that found on the banks of the lake ; and they are commonly intersected by thick veins of quartz : in the interstices we found some beautiful groups of small rock crystals. Large and brilliant pieces of the same substance are found in

other parts of Kerry, particularly, as I am informed, on the mountains near Tralee : coarse amethysts also abound there.

We descended the reeks by a different route from that by which we went up ; and, having arrived at the base, found ourselves in a valley at the head of the upper lake. Soon afterwards we joined a party who awaited our arrival, at a cottage situated at Car-riguline, on the banks of a river which affords the chief supply of water to the lake.

Here, on recounting the adventures of the day, and boasting of having been on the highest ground in Ireland, an old grey-headed man, who stood by, expressed some doubts of the fact ; adding, that, if we had really been on the most lofty point of the reeks, it would have been impossible for us to have returned before night. We appealed to our guides, who, jealous of their reputation, of course confirmed our story. To put this matter beyond doubt, however, the old man requested us to come to the door and point out the mountain we had ascended. The reeks rose in full view before the cottage, and we could easily trace our route to the most lofty peak. This was sufficient to confirm his first supposition. Gheraun-tuel, he told us, was much higher than any of the other points, and was neither visible from the valley in which we stood, nor from any part of the lake of Killarney. It was to no purpose that the

guides maintained the contrary : the evidence of our own senses had already impeached their knowledge, and their ignorance of the country was now proved by the concurrent testimony of several mountaineers.

The difficulty of ascending Gheraun-tuel was represented to us as very great, and no stranger, we were told, had ever attempted it. This was but an additional incentive to undertake the enterprise ; and the old man having offered his son as a guide, the next day but one was appointed for the expedition.

We left the town of Killarney at five in the morning, and proceeded to Ross castle, where a boat attended to convey us to the head of the upper lake. We found the guide at the appointed place, seated on a rock and watching for our arrival : no time, he said, was to be lost ; and we instantly set out at a quick pace. The path lay through an extensive valley, watered by a chain of small lakes, and a river which connected them together. There was something in the character of this feature that recalled to our recollection the gap of Dunloh : but the scenery was here much tamer ; and was rather to be admired for the delightful verdure of the peaceful and retired meads, than for the boldness of the rocks or the height and abruptness of the impending precipices. Several other valleys branched off to the right and left, into one of the former of which we turned, after proceeding about four miles ; but did not begin to

ascend the heights until we had advanced to a considerable distance further. The first mountain we came to, though exceedingly steep, was not difficult of ascent, as the rocks were few, and the ground on which we trod dry and firm. On the summit was a vast plain covered with coarse grass, beyond which, in the distance, appeared the conical head of Gherauntuel; but we had walked at least four or five miles along the plain before we saw more of the mountain. A full view of it at last opened from the brink of a tremendous precipice, whose depth we could not then discover. It rose with great regularity in the form of a cone, and, to appearance, stood quite insulated, except on the nearest side, where it was connected with the mountain on which we stood by a sort of spur, forming an isthmus, and bearing a resemblance, though on a scale of such great magnitude, to the artificial approach to an old castle. At the height from which we viewed it, this pass did not seem to be wider than might be sufficient for a single carriage; and though, on descending, we found it at least sixty feet broad, yet the immense depth and great abruptness of the precipices at each side, so imposed on the senses, that we could scarcely persuade ourselves of being in perfect safety in its very centre. Here, however, we halted, at once to admire the sublimity of the scene, and to take some refreshment and repose. From this place to the summit

the distance did not appear to be very great, as the slope, owing to our contiguity to the mountain, was fore-shortened ; but, though we advanced with ardour, and the way, except being very steep, was not incommodious, we did not arrive at the top until an hour and a half after we set out.

Gheraun-tuel is formed of grey hornstone, or chert ; hornslate, quartz, feldspar, and pale red porphyry. Towards the summit the stones were all split into small flags ; but they had no tendency to divide into thinner fragments, and broke more readily across than in any other direction : they were extremely hard and tough, and exhibited no appearance of decomposition. The top of the mountain presented a smooth area nearly circular, about thirty feet in diameter, from which there was an uniform slope on every side. Hence we had a distinct view of Dingle bay, and of the whole coast between it and the river Shannon ; and, in the opposite direction, of Kenmare river, Bantry bay, and the great estuaries of the south-western coast. The inland view was less interesting than from the other points of the reeks, as but few lakes could be distinguished, and the beauty and variety of the ground beneath was lost in the immensity of the distance. We soon recognised, from this place, the peaks which we had ascended two days before ; and, as they appeared much below us,

it was obvious that we had at last gained that elevation to which we had with so much toil aspired.

While we gazed with wonder upon this stupendous scene, our guide, pointing to the bay of Dingle, began a long history of a hero of the name of Shec. How he was tempted with treasures by the devil, and induced to swim after them from the shore ; when, to his surprise and disappointment, instead of a rich prize, he was deluded by a white sheet that floated on the water, in which being soon entangled, he was dragged to the bottom of the sea ; since which time no person of his name had ever been able to cross the bay in safety : but, before he had half finished a narrative which to him appeared very important, the intensity of the cold made us prepare for taking leave of this elevated region. Desirous, however, before we descended, of leaving some memorial of our presence, we collected a number of large stones, and erected a pyramid on the summit of the mountain, which yet perhaps bids defiance to the storms.

Having arrived once more at the isthmus, or connecting ridge, we were informed that there were two routes by which the mountain might be descended. The first was so long that it was doubtful if we could accomplish it before night ; the other was shorter, but somewhat hazardous. The preference was given to the latter ; and, after a short progress, we were

conducted to a precipice, at least sixty feet deep, down which we were told it was necessary to take our course. The proposal startled us, nor did we conceive how it was practicable ; but the guide, seating himself at the brink of it, on a rock which presented an even face nearly to the bottom of the precipice, slid down it, taking the precaution, however, to impede the velocity of the descent by catching hold of the tufts of long grass which grew from the crevices at each side. His example was followed without hesitation ; and, having accelerated our descent down the steepest part of the mountain, by sliding over other rocks of a similar description, we soon reached the bottom. We found our horses on the banks of a river, where orders had previously been given that they should be brought ; and at ten at night we arrived in the town of Killarney, after an absence of seventeen hours ; during the whole of which time we had only enjoyed one of repose.

Of the other mountains in the vicinity of Killarney, Mangerton,* which lies to the south-east of Turk, approaches the nearest to the elevation of the reeks. According to the computation given me by the gentleman before alluded to, this mountain is only seven hundred feet lower than the reeks ; but Mr Kirwan informed me, that, from his measurement,

* See the view of Ross castle, and the description.

it did not appear to be more than two thousand feet high. It is somewhat singular, therefore, that this mountain should have been esteemed, for a long time, the most lofty in Ireland. Dr Smith ranks it as such in his History of Kerry, though he acknowledges that its appearance would lead to a different conclusion. "Magillicuddy's reeks," says he, "seem higher to the eye; but most hills which are conical, and terminating in points, appear higher, at a distance, than those mountains which have a large surface on their tops. They are steeper than Mangerton, and have more terrible precipices and declivities, so that it was in a manner impossible to determine their height by a barometer." The preceding pages demonstrate how much the Doctor was mistaken, if he supposed they were inaccessible.

There is a road, or rather path, to the very summit of Mangerton, which renders the ascent easy; few strangers therefore neglect seeing it. The horses of the country are better adapted than any others for the excursion, being remarkably sure-footed, and accustomed to the steepness and ruggedness of the way. A very extensive view opens from the summit, particularly in the direction of Kenmare river; but neither the Atlantic ocean or the coast are seen to so much advantage as from Magillicuddy's reeks. The great object of curiosity on this mountain, which induces so many to encounter the toil of the ascent,

is a lake situated within three hundred feet of its summit, called the Devil's Punch-bowl, which the natives pretend is unfathomable ; and its depth, I believe, is very great. It is chiefly remarkable for the clearness and intense coldness of the water.

A story is current at Killarney, that the late celebrated Mr Fox swam entirely round this lake, and made a prophetic boast that no one would afterwards be found to perform the same feat. A party, when I first visited Killarney, set out with a determination to accept of the challenge ; but being extremely overheated by a walk up the mountain in one of the hottest days of summer, the adventure, after a short experience of the piercing coldness of the water, was abandoned, as too perilous. The guides still inform strangers that no one has, either before or since, displayed the same prowess as Mr Fox.

The summit of Mangerton displays an immense plain, covered with coarse grass and heath, amongst which scarcely a rock is to be seen. The surface consists of a spongy substance, very like a bog, which in some places is easily penetrable with a stick to a great depth. So great is the extent of this plain, and so frequent the recurrence of fogs and mists, that it is not unusual for people to lose their way whilst traversing it ; and, after night-fall, it is thought safer to remain on the mountain than to encounter the precipices by which it is environed. I was once with a

party which had been shooting on the mountains beyond Mangerton, and, in the way back to Killarney, had to cross this plain. On advancing, the air became obscure ; and, at last, such dense vapours enveloped us, that it was impossible to distinguish an object at the distance of a few yards. Under these circumstances we continued to walk, for more than two hours, over an unvaried surface, where no track whatsoever was visible ; our guide still asserting that he was leading us home by the shortest possible route. The mist soon penetrated our clothes, and we began to experience all the inconvenience of wet and cold, when the guide, suddenly stopping, took off his coat, turned it inside out, and again deliberately put it on. We marvelled very much at this extraordinary proceeding, and his reluctance to give a satisfactory reply to our inquiries into the motives of it, served but to excite still greater curiosity. At last, being pressed for an explanation, he acknowledged that he was totally ignorant of our situation, and had turned his coat as a charm of potent influence to enable a lost man to recover his way. The intelligence was unwelcome : the day was fast approaching to a close, and there was danger of our taking the very opposite course to that which ought to be followed. In this predicament, therefore, the party halted, and a council was held to consider of the best means of delivering ourselves from this dreary solitude. It was

unnecessary to deliberate long. At our feet a rill issued from the ground ; and, as it was obvious that it must run down the mountain, in some direction, we determined at once to be guided by its course. Never did navigator, in quest of unknown regions, follow with more ardent expectation the windings of a river, than did we the meanders of this little stream. Sometimes dividing into several branches, we were left in doubt which to pursue : but they seldom continued long separate, and, on uniting, each one appeared to bring with it an additional supply of water. The size of the stream thus increasing, confidence kept pace with our progress. At last it swelled to a considerable river, and was heard at a distance, roaring amongst rocks. Just at this moment the dark cloud which had enveloped us, caught by a sudden gust of wind, rose like a vast curtain, and revealed a stupendous scene, of whose awful sublimity no time can obliterate the recollection. We found ourselves on the brink of a tremendous gulph, whose depth was concealed by the gloom ; but down whose precipitous and rocky sides the water, which had conducted us, tumbled in a torrent. The opposite side of the gulph, as far as we could trace it, seemed to consist of a perpendicular face of solid rock, for many hundred feet, and in whatever direction we turned our eyes, nought could be perceived but “ Wilds immeasurably spread.” We contemplated the preci-

pice with mingled emotions of hope and fear ; doubtful whether it would be possible to descend at this place, and having no alternative, if baffled in the attempt, but to pass the night upon the mountain.

The way downward was rugged in the extreme. It was with difficulty, indeed, we could force a passage through the briers and tall heath ; and the sudden breaks in the rocks would have been an effectual bar to our progress, had it not been for the occasional assistance we derived from the branches of sapling oaks which shot from the crags, by means of which we lowered ourselves from steep to steep. At last, after much labour, and nearly exhausted with fatigue, we reached the bottom, and found ourselves in a romantic and beautiful glen, through which the stream that, for a considerable time past, had only been heard among the shades, tumbling over rocks, was now seen gliding over a bed of pebbles, bounded on each side by delightful verdant banks. The glen widened as we advanced, and, at the distance of a mile, terminated on the confines of a spacious lake.

This place is about six miles distant from Killarney, and is called, I believe, the Glen of the Horse ; probably from the excellence of its pastures. The lake is known by the name of Lough Etoun. It is upwards of a mile in length, of an oval form, and contains some beautiful islands. Besides this lake, there are several others on the same side of Manger-

ton, all of which contribute, by connecting streams, to supply the great lake of Killarney. They all claim the attention of the traveller : some of them, which are closely surrounded by vast precipices, are objects of great curiosity.

Mangerton affords a more extensive variety of mineral productions than I observed on any of the other mountains. Besides the different siliceous stones which abound in the country, it contains several sorts of argillaceous schistus, particularly towards the summit, in the vicinity of the Punch-bowl ; the schistus, which is of a yellowish colour, is much decomposed, and separates into minute splinters. In the excavations which have been made by torrents lower down the mountain, large pieces of novaculite are found, bedded in yellow clay, which are sought for with avidity, and used by the people of the country as whet-stones. Some specimens are found of a very fine grain, which are considered applicable to the nicest purposes. Iron is very abundant, particularly the argillaceous upland ore, and brown and red iron stone ; the latter are described as the sorts that were most commonly manufactured in Kerry. I have found on this mountain also some very beautiful specimens of specular iron ore adhering to quartz. No calcareous matter is any where observable on it.

The other mountains which lie in the vicinity of Killarney are considerably lower than Mangerton.

The relative heights of Tomies, Turk, and Glens, are nearly in the order in which they are mentioned ; and of those on the confines of the upper lake, the Purple-mountain and the Sugar-loaf are the next, I believe, in magnitude to the Reeks. Of all these the geological character appears nearly the same as that of Mangerton and the Reeks: the former affords a greater variety of minerals ; but in none of the mountains around the lake have any substances of peculiar interest been discovered.

Of the plants of this country I am unable to give any account from my own observation. Doctor Wade, M.L.S., professor of botany to the Dublin Society, &c., in a list of indigenous plants, which are rather rare and valuable in Ireland, enumerates the following amongst those which he has found at Killarney and in the vicinity :*

<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	- - - - -	<i>strawberry-tree.</i>
<i>Asplenium adiantum nigrum</i>	- -	<i>black maiden-hair.</i>
----- <i>trichomanes</i>	- - -	<i>common ditto.</i>
<i>Bartsia viscosa</i>	- - - - -	<i>viscous bartsia.</i>
<i>Betonica officinalis</i>	- - - - -	<i>wood-betony.</i>
<i>Bryum laterale</i>	- - - - -	<i>lateral bryum.</i>
<i>Buxbaumia foliosa</i>	- - - - -	<i>leafy Buxbaumia.</i>
----- <i>aphylla</i>	- - - - -	<i>leafless ditto.</i>
<i>Carex pulicaris</i>	- - - - -	<i>flea-seg.</i>
----- <i>curta</i>	- - - - -	<i>white ditto.</i>

* Transactions of the Dublin Society, 1804.

<i>Carex distans</i>	- - - - -	<i>loose flea-seg.</i>
<i>Cratægus Aria</i>	- - - - -	<i>white beam-tree.</i>
<i>Euphorbia hibernica</i>	- - - - -	<i>Irish spurge.</i>
<i>Empetrum nigrum</i>	- - - - -	<i>black crow-berry.</i>
<i>Festuca vivipara</i>	- - - - -	<i>viviparous fescue-grass.</i>
<i>Fontinalis antipyretica</i>	- - - - -	<i>greater water-moss.</i>
———— <i>squamosa</i>	- - - - -	<i>scaly ditto.</i>
<i>Gnaphalium margaritaceum</i>	- - - - -	<i>everlasting pea.</i>
<i>Geranium lucidum</i>	- - - - -	<i>shining crane's-bill.</i>
<i>Hedypnois Taraxaci</i>	- - - - -	<i>alpine headypnois.</i>
<i>Hieracium sabaudum</i>	- - - - -	<i>shrubby-leaved hawkweed.</i>
<i>Hypnum attenuatum</i>	- - - - -	<i>slender hypnum.</i>
———— <i>intricatum</i>	- - - - -	<i>matted ditto.</i>
———— <i>polyanthos</i>	- - - - -	<i>Schreber ditto.</i>
<i>Juncus campestris</i> var. β .		
———— <i>trifidus</i>	- - - - -	<i>three-leaved rush.</i>
<i>Juniperus communis</i>	- - - - -	<i>common juniper.</i>
<i>Jungermannia asplenioides</i>	- - - - -	<i>spleenwort Jungermannia.</i>
———— <i>biscuspidata</i>	- - - - -	<i>forked ditto.</i>
<i>Lichen crenulatus</i>	- - - - -	<i>little crenate lichen.</i>
———— <i>floridus</i>	- - - - -	<i>flowery ditto.</i>
———— <i>furcatus</i>	- - - - -	<i>forked ditto.</i>
———— <i>globiferus</i>	- - - - -	<i>globe ditto.</i>
———— <i>horizontalis</i>	- - - - -	<i>brown horizontal ditto.</i>
———— <i>islandicus</i>	- - - - -	<i>Iceland ditto.</i>
———— <i>paschalis</i>	- - - - -	<i>crisp ditto.</i>
———— <i>plicatus</i>	- - - - -	<i>stringy ditto.</i>
———— <i>polyrhizos</i>	- - - - -	<i>dusky rock lichen.</i>
———— <i>pubescens</i>	- - - - -	<i>pubescent ditto.</i>
———— <i>pustulatus</i>	- - - - -	<i>blistered ditto.</i>
———— <i>resupinatus</i>	- - - - -	<i>reversed ditto.</i>
———— <i>scrobiculatus</i>	- - - - -	<i>pitted ditto.</i>
<i>Lobelia Dortmanna</i>	- - - - -	<i>water Lobelia.</i>

<i>Lycopodium selago</i>	- - - -	<i>fir club-moss.</i>
<i>Marchantia hemispherica</i>	- - -	<i>hemispherical Marchantia.</i>
<i>Mentha arvensis.</i>		
——— <i>hirsuta</i> var. <i>δ.</i> (Smith)		
——— <i>pulegium</i>	- - - -	<i>pennyroyal.</i>
<i>Mnium glaucum</i>	- - - -	<i>glaucous mnium.</i>
——— <i>pseudo-triquetrum.</i>	- -	
<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	- - - -	<i>flowering fern.</i>
<i>Polypodium dryopteris</i>	- - -	<i>thrice-branched polypody.</i>
————— <i>fragile</i>	- - - -	<i>fine-leaved brittle ditto.</i>
————— <i>fragrans</i>	- - - -	<i>sweet polypody.</i>
<i>Polytrichum aloides</i>	- - - -	<i>dwarf polytrichum.</i>
<i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>	- - - -	<i>purging buckthorn.</i>
<i>Rhodeola rosea</i>	- - - -	<i>rosewort.</i>
<i>Rubus idæus</i>	- - - -	<i>raspberry.</i>
——— <i>saxatilis</i>	- - - -	<i>stone-bramble.</i>
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	- - - -	<i>wild madder.</i>
<i>Saxifraga stellaris</i>	- - - -	<i>hairy saxifrage.</i>
————— <i>umbrosa</i>	- - - -	<i>London pride.</i>
<i>Scirpus fluitans</i>	- - - -	<i>floating club-moss.</i>
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	- - - -	<i>mountain ash.</i>
<i>Serapias latifolia</i>	- - - -	<i>broad-leaved helleborine.</i>
<i>Thymus serpyllum.</i>		
<i>Trichomanes Tunbridgense</i>	- -	<i>Tunbridge goldilocks.</i>

Wild and dreary as the vast region of mountains on the western side of the county of Kerry appears to be, it boasts, nevertheless, of a numerous and hardy population. The chief occupation of the people is pasturage ; and, from the milk of their herds, a large portion of that excellent butter is produced which is exported from Cork and Limerick to every quarter

of the globe.* The habitations are generally situated in valleys ; but it is somewhat remarkable that they seldom stand in such a number together as to form what might be termed a hamlet, although the people are universally of an open cheerful disposition, fond of conversation, and devoted to hospitable associations.

The land is held not by the acre ; for, in these mountains, such minute divisions are of little importance ; but, according to the language of the country, *by the lump* ; that is, by large tracts : and, after an agreement has been made with the landlord for their respective shares, it is usual for many different families to form a partnership, and make a joint concern of their several farms. Where pasturage alone is followed, great benefit accrues to the little community from this practice. It saves the labour and expense of multiplied superintendence ; it excites attention to the general interest, and prevents disputes that would otherwise arise concerning boundaries, where the benefit to be derived from their existence is not adequate to the cost of their erection. Each

* The butter of Kerry is amongst the best of the island. It is a well-known fact, that much of it is remade in London ; and, deprived of its salt, is sold in that city as the produce of Epping : many a worthy citizen, who would spurn at the idea of breakfasting upon the produce of the Irish mountains, devours it, unconscious of its origin.

man, in proportion to the computed extent of his land, is permitted to maintain a certain number of cattle; and, in many instances, where the parties have confidence in each other, they make a joint stock both of their kine and their produce.

This country was formerly remarkable for a very small and beautiful breed of black cattle; but the people have been seized with the spirit of improvement, and the true Kerry cow, as it is called, is now rarely to be found, excepting amongst the mountains in the vicinity of Bantry-bay. The size of this animal does not exceed that of an ordinary yearling calf. From the prevalent inclination of the people to discard the native stock of their hills, it is presumed that they derive more profit from the enlarged breed: but there are some of a contrary opinion, who still maintain their attachment to the ancient race, and who contend that, from their hardy character, and the abundance and richness of their milk, they are peculiarly adapted to the situation and circumstances of the country.

Immense herds of goats are likewise fed in these mountains, whose milk is chiefly used by the peasants for their domestic purposes, as it yields only an indifferent sort of butter, for which there is no demand in the export market. The rambling disposition of these animals, for they sometimes spread over the whole side of a mountain, covering it with white

dots, would be productive of considerable inconvenience to the owners, were it not for the assistance they derive from dogs. We were much entertained, one evening, at seeing a woman deliberately come forth from a cottage with her pails to milk a herd, which was dispersed over an extent of some miles. She cast her eye around, to discover on which mountain they were browsing; and then, pointing them out to two little dogs, sat patiently down on a stone to wait their arrival. The dogs, who were well acquainted with this business, ran off at full speed; and presently we could distinguish the whole herd in motion, and, assembling into one body, move briskly down the mountain. A few that seemed refractory were soon compelled to obedience; and, in less than half an hour, they all stood around the door of the cottage. The herbage of the mountains is but ill adapted to sheep; and, in some places, is said to be absolutely poisonous. The few which are fed are of a diminutive size. We bought one, when encamped on a shooting party, which was esteemed fat, for half-a-guinea; and they are sometimes sold at a still lower price: the mutton is of very delicious flavour.

The valleys between the mountains, in general, contain a soil, capable, if properly cultivated, of yielding abundant crops; but the inhabitants, insensible of its real value, are satisfied with tilling small patches near their dwellings, sufficient to produce

some oats or potatoes, which, with milk, constitute their chief food. A very scanty portion of it is allotted for meadow ; the hay which is necessary for the winter being procured, for the most part, from the mountains, where it is collected from various little spots, on which the grass, from being sheltered by rocks, or from growing on a drier soil, is found to be luxuriant. It is common for a man, in the season, to traverse the side of a mountain with a scythe, and cut the grass perhaps from fifty small patches, which, when accumulated together, does not produce one ton of hay. The excellence of the grass in these dry parts is a certain indication of the great advantage which might be derived from drains, as they might easily be cut. Indeed, in various parts of this mountainous region, there are immense tracts which now yield only a coarse herbage for cattle, that might, and which probably one day will, be devoted to tillage, and produce food for thousands of human beings.

The great impediment to the improvement of this country is the want of carriage-roads, which prevents the mountaineers, without much labour and expense, from bringing lime to their little farms, the great source of fertility in this soil. At present all traffic is carried on by means of horses ; but although these animals, from long habit, can traverse the mountainous regions with a boldness and dexterity unknown to the more valuable and high-bred races of a culti-

vated country, yet it is frequently found necessary to unlade their burthens, in order to enable them to pass over the rocks by which the ways are obstructed. On a distant part of Mangerton mountain I observed a very narrow track, barely discernible amidst the heath, which I was informed was a much frequented horse road. Following its course, I found it was crossed by a ledge of steep rocks, which extended as far as the eye could reach on either side ; and, afterwards, it passed for a considerable distance along the brink of a precipice, where a single false step must, to all appearance, be productive of inevitable destruction. Yet, intricate and dangerous as the way seemed, on reaching the foot of the mountain, when it was already dusk, we met a party of mountaineers, some of whom were intoxicated and tottering on their horses, riding at a smart pace, and advancing along this very road without the least solicitude about the perils they were to meet in their progress.

The butter of this country is almost all conveyed to Cork by the peasants who make it ; and it is common to meet twenty horses or more in a string, on a leading mountain road, each one carrying two casks. I was informed by a friend, that when he first visited Kerry, at which period improvement and civilization were in their infancy, it was very usual to see a cask of butter on one side, and a large stone on the other to balance it ; but it has since been discovered that

one cask is the best counterpoise to another, and every horse is now doubly laden. In returning from Cork they bring back empty casks, and such articles as are wanted for home consumption.

This commerce is attended with the most beneficial effects to the country at large, as well as to this particular district. It supplies a valuable article of export, which serves to counteract the great weight of British manufactures and foreign goods which are imported ; and, if not fully sufficient to counterbalance them, at least prevents their overbearing preponderance. It opens a source of honest independence to a hardy and intelligent race of men, and stimulates industry to active exertion. It assists also in a material degree to improve the condition of the people. The mountaineer no longer remains a secluded being, wandering amidst the wilds, and driving his miserable kine, the associates of his life, from heath to heath. He descends with his rich burthen into cultivated plains and peopled towns, where, mingling with his more polished fellow-creatures, he returns at once inspired with the incentives, and enriched with the means, to adopt the more settled habits of civilized life. This intercourse serves to point out the advantage derivable from a knowledge of the English language, as well as from writing and arithmetic ; and the establishment of the means of education is a natural consequence. Amidst some of the

wildest mountains of Kerry, I have met with English schools ; and even seen multitudes of children seated round the humble residence of their instructor, with their books, pens and ink, where rocks have supplied the place of desks and benches. Nor is the dissemination of domestic and foreign intelligence neglected in these mountains. Even in the very centre of Iveragh* the farmers receive newspapers ; and, at the commencement of the present war with Spain, I found the peasantry as much alive to the consequences of a rupture with that country, as the merchant who, unsuspecting of danger, had inadvertently consigned a rich cargo to the port of an enemy. They were well aware that Spain was one of the principal marts for the produce of their dairies ; and that, if the communication with that country was impeded, the Cork traders would make it a pretence for offering a lower price for their commodities.

The mountaineers of Kerry are, in general, well clothed ; the men, I hesitate not to say, better than many of the peasants of England : but the females, neither here nor in those parts of Ireland where, from the flourishing state of manufactures, and the great gains which attend industry, they have more money to spare for the embellishment of their persons, seem to have acquired a taste for that neat and

* Iveragh is situated on the south side of Dingle bay.

simple dress which distinguishes the females of the same class in the sister isle. I have observed, however, in some parts of the mountains of Kerry, a very becoming dress in common use amongst the women, which, like many other things in this country, is, I believe, of Spanish origin. It consists of a jacket of crimson or scarlet cloth, with long loose sleeves, made to fit very close round the neck and bosom, and fastened in front with a row of buttons. I do not recollect to have seen it in any other part of the country than the barony of Iveragh.

Fuel, that essential necessary of human life, is abundant throughout the mountains; it consists of turf or peat, furze and heath, which last commonly attains the height of six feet, and bears a stem proportionably thick.

On the whole, being well provided with food, fuel, and raiment, the condition of the people may, in many instances, be considered extremely comfortable. The appearance of the habitations, which are rude and clumsy without, and far from cleanly within, would lead a stranger to form a very different conclusion; but comfort is a relative term, and those who have not acquired by long habit a relish for regularity and neatness, are not sensible of inconvenience from their privation. The mountaineer who enters his cottage drenched with rain, fatigued with traversing vast heaths, or with relieving his cattle

from the perils of the precipice and morass, esteems his habitation comfortable in proportion to its warmth ; and heeds not the sooty coating of the roof, or the dusky colour of the scanty furniture, while he enjoys the fierce blaze of a huge pile of turf. That these people would be neat and cleanly in their general habits, if they were once made sensible of the advantages resulting therefrom, I have no doubt. They are fully aware that, to have good butter, minute cleanliness, and well-ventilated apartments, are essentially requisite ; and many of their dairies vie in these respects with the most expensive and best-regulated that are to be found in Great Britain. Far be it from me, however, to extenuate their slovenliness, and too general inattention to the decency of their dwellings. No person can be more sensible of these defects ; no person can wish more ardently to behold them amended.

They marry at a very early age : the men commonly at eighteen, the females much sooner ; and it is no rare occurrence to behold four generations together in health and vigour. The inducements to marriage are numerous ; the impediments few. The extent of the mountain-farms being, in general, great, they admit of a division proportionate to the increase of the people. A habitation for the new-married couple is built at a trifling expense. Stones suitable for the purpose abound in every place ; and it requires little

skill to heap them together in form of a wall, and plaster them with clay ; the heath supplies materials for the thatch. A plot of ground is readily converted into a potatoe garden ; and its never-failing produce is generally more than adequate to the wants of the little family. If, to all these advantages, were to be added the gain arising from such domestic manufactures as are common in the north of Ireland, and which might well be carried on in this country, these people would become wealthy : but they seem contented with what they already possess ; and, attached to a course of life which is, comparatively, one of ease and indolence, they are sometimes heard to express pity and contempt for the condition of those who are doomed to incessant manual labour.

Mountaineers are commonly disposed to pride themselves on their superiority to the inhabitants of lowland countries. That they are in general more robust, more hardy, and more athletic, is unquestionable. Exposed from their infancy to the storms and sudden vicissitudes of weather which usually prevail in elevated regions, their bodies become braced with vigour, and habitually inured to the inclemency of the seasons. In attending their herds, the common occupation of such people, they learn betimes to move with agility over rocks and rugged ground ; and their limbs, thus exercised, acquire strength, without the risk of being overstrained by premature

and violent exertions. Nor is it only by their activity and hardiness that the mountaineers are distinguished ; in general, they are much more shrewd and intelligent than the peasants of the low country. Their way of life affording more leisure than that of the labourer, who is unceasingly employed in the field, extends their opportunities for conversation ; and those of Kerry have further advantages from their trade, which, obliging them to travel frequently to Cork and Limerick, helps to open their minds by inciting inquiry and gratifying curiosity.

The peasantry of Kerry are generally tall and well-proportioned. Swarthy complexions, dark eyes, and long black hair, are common amongst them ; in which features some persons pretend to trace the origin of their race from Spain ; and the appellation of Milesians, from Milesus, who led a colony from that country, is given to them : this reputed distinction from the other inhabitants of Ireland is eagerly maintained amongst the lower orders.

To delineate with fidelity the character and manners of any people, a long acquaintance and frequent communication with them are absolutely necessary : the observations of transitory curiosity can serve little purpose but the gratification of a feeling similar to that in which they originated. Of the mountaineers of Kerry I can only say, that, during a sojourn of several months in the country, they appear-

ed to me to be a frank, honest race of men ; of a very independent spirit ; acute in understanding ; and friendly and hospitable towards strangers. In my various intercourse with them, I met with but one instance that contradicted this character. It occurred in the vicinity of Lough-scald, amongst the hills on the north side of the bay of Dingle, where, though we gave the people a pecuniary recompense for the liberty they had allowed us of pitching our tents and grazing our horses for two nights, exceeding, in a three-fold proportion, the annual value of the whole field we occupied, and probably as much exceeding also their first expectations as it did the value of what we received ; yet, tempted by avarice, they pretended that we had not given them half enough ; and, as our interpreters told us, (for they spoke Irish) abused us extremely for intruding amongst them. On the opposite side of the bay of Dingle, among the mountains of Iveragh, where we had spent the preceding week, a similar recompense was received with such gratitude, that the owner of the field, and two of his companions, followed our horses and baggage upwards of sixteen miles, for the sole purpose of assisting in pitching our tents, and endeavouring to provide us with comfortable quarters in another part of the country. Of this man we heard an anecdote which deserves to be recorded. In another age, his

heroism would have entitled him to a civic crown ; and, in this, where pecuniary compensations are so commonly substituted in lieu of ideal honours, it was rewarded with a purse of one hundred guineas from the underwriters.

A large vessel, during a tempestuous night, had been wrecked in the bay of Dingle. In the morning, before the storm had yet subsided, her remains were seen at a distance from shore, on an insulated bank of sand, so situated that no boat could approach, while the depth and breadth of the water which flowed round the bank precluded three unfortunate sufferers, who still adhered to the wreck, from attempting to reach the shore. Their signals of distress were distinctly seen by crowds of people, who gazed on them from the beach with all the anxiety attending a conscious incapacity to rescue them from their impending fate. Our hero, however, conceived a project which he executed with all the promptitude of zealous humanity. He hastened to his farm, seized one of his stoutest horses, and, having stripped himself naked, mounted the animal and rushed into the waves. The first victim within his reach was placed on the horse behind him, and he returned to the shore in triumph. The success with which the achievement was performed augmented his confidence and courage. A second attempt bore off a second man ;

nor did his exertions relax, amidst all the multiplied perils of the storm, until he had landed the despairing remnant of the crew in safety on the shore.

Greeted on his success with the loudest acclamations, a general spirit of sympathy, in behalf of the sufferers thus rescued, seemed to pervade the breasts of the beholders. But, alas! there were some present whose outward emotions but ill accorded with their former conduct; for to their depravity alone was to be ascribed the melancholy catastrophe of the shipwreck. The ship was homeward-bound from Surinam, with a rich cargo, and, on the appearance of an approaching tempest, had put into the bay of Dingle for shelter; where the master, not being acquainted with the harbour, nor well aware of his exact situation, late in the evening, sent a boat to shore to make the necessary inquiries, and procure a pilot. His people were invited to a house, and offers made to search for a person acquainted with the bay; but no pilot appearing, after a delay of some time, they felt it their duty to return to the vessel. On arriving at the boat, they found, however, to their dismay, that the oars had been secreted. Thus prevented from informing the captain of his danger, he remained in ignorance of it; and the vessel, exposed during the night to the violence of the gale, drifted from her anchors, and perished on the sands.

The bay of Dingle, near the scene of this unfortu-

nate calamity, is traversed by two long sand-banks, which, projecting from opposite sides, nearly meet, and divide the bay into outer and inner harbours. On the south side, the sand, having accumulated to a great height, opposed a barrier to the waves, and a considerable extent of ground was left dry behind it, which, in process of time, was appropriated to cultivation. It was in this place the miscreants who had been instrumental to the destruction of the vessel had their farms ; and not long after it happened, the sea, rolling in with an unusual impetuosity, burst through the mound, and completely overwhelmed their whole property. That such atrocity should have been marked by some signal retribution, is a common sentiment through the whole civilized world ; but, in a country where the peculiar character of the popular superstition is to impute a more immediate agency to the divine power, it is not to be wondered at that this event was universally attributed to the vindictive judgment of offended Heaven.

The friendly and hospitable disposition of the mountaineers of Iveragh far exceeded what we met with elsewhere. As we traversed that wildest part of Kerry, our tents each morning were surrounded with people bringing presents of eggs, butter, poultry, and fish, particularly trout, with which the streams abound ; and, on being informed that nothing would be accepted without payment, they went away apparently

much disappointed. Curiosity to see a party of men of a class somewhat different from what they were accustomed to behold in this remote region, and, above all, the novel spectacle of the tents, might have operated as an incentive to their conduct on these occasions ; but of the good will with which the presents were offered there could be no doubt.

The morning of our departure, after being a few days stationary in a valley, multitudes came down from the surrounding mountains ; and the process of striking the tents was contemplated with as much astonishment as we are told a similar occurrence produced among the natives of the Pellew islands. An old man who had followed, with others, and to whom some respect appeared to be shown, made a long harangue on the occasion. He concluded it, as we were informed, (for he spoke in Irish) by observing, “ That he was then far advanced in years, and had seen and heard of many extraordinary things, but to behold people pull down their houses and carry them away in bags, was a wondrous sight, which almost exceeded belief.”

Of the real comforts enjoyed by many of the peasants of this country, whilst the exterior aspect of their habitation is that of poverty, we had a convincing proof at this place. In advancing towards it over the mountains, we had been drenched with torrents of rain, and had been obliged to wade through

several streams which were suddenly swollen to a great height. The length of the way the horses had to travel through the valleys, and the miserable state of the roads, as they were called, retarded the progress of the baggage ; we entered a house, therefore, to shelter ourselves from the storm till their arrival. None of the women spoke English ; but, by signs and gestures, they bade us welcome to their humble habitation, and, perceiving our uncomfortable state, eagerly assisted us in taking off our wet apparel. A blazing fire was made to dry it ; and, in the mean time, we were presented with shirts, coarse indeed, but made up with all the neatness of a town laundress ; a clean blanket also, taken from a large chest, was thrown round the shoulders of each. No silly bashfulness was displayed on this occasion by the women, although they were young and pretty. Their thoughts seemed intent alone on offices of kindness, and they lent a willing hand both in undressing and in robing us. Presently the man of the house entered, who spoke English ; he thanked us for our visit to him in preference to another ; applauded the conduct of the women in his absence, and hoped we had got to eat the best his house could afford. Some potatoes and wheaten cakes were toasting at the fire, a sight tempting to men whose appetites had been sharpened by traversing a long tract of mountain during the inclemency of a storm : with the addition of eggs, milk,

and butter, each excellent in kind, they were set on a table covered with a clean cloth, and furnished a feast, superior, perhaps, to what ever gratified the pampered palate of a city alderman.

To describe every grand and beautiful scene amongst these mountains would occupy volumes. Rivers, lakes, cascades, rocks, and glens, are here displayed in all their delightful variety ; and, from the heights, the most sublime views open of the coast and the Atlantic ocean. Woods, indeed, are wanting : the general aspect of the country is bleak ; yet in a few of the glens we found coppices and thickets, which overhung the water-falls, and, in some measure, supplied the deficiency. Each day that we spent in these wilds afforded new delights ; and, after an absence of weeks, it was not without regret that we returned once more to the town of Killarney.

SECTION IV.

KILLARNEY may be ranked amongst the neatest of the small towns of Ireland : the streets are of a commodious breadth, and well paved ; and, on each side, there are raised flagged ways for the convenience of foot passengers.

The remoteness of the town from the lake occasions much trouble to strangers ; and, so far from being attended with any advantage to the inhabitants, exposes them to inconvenience, by placing them beyond the immediate reach of an object of prime necessity,—soft water.

It is often a very difficult matter to account satisfactorily for the position of inland towns. Sometimes it was determined by accident ; sometimes by arbitrary circumstances : but it seldom depended on a deliberate consideration of the permanent advantages of the spot. In some instances, a town arose in the neighbourhood of the dwelling of the lord of the soil, in consequence of the security which it afforded to his tenantry and dependants : in others, at the junc-

tion of cross roads, where many travellers were likely to pass ; and where some would be induced to tarry, by the hopes of meeting companions for the remainder of their journey, in times of danger, when the highways could not be safely passed by single persons. Perhaps one, or both of these causes, might have contributed to determine the situation of the town of Killarney. Several leading roads pass through it, and it stands contiguous to the mansion of Lord Kenmare, the proprietor of a vast extent of the surrounding country : but, to whatever cause the first growth of the town is attributable, certain it is that its present prosperity is owing to the liberality of his lordship, in granting lots of ground upon easy terms to those who are inclined to build ; and it will probably continue to increase under the influence of the same system.

The population of the town has been estimated at five thousand persons ; but I suspect that the number is over-rated by at least one-fourth, although in the principal streets I counted nearly three hundred slated houses ; and, in the alleys and lanes which branch from them in different directions, the habitations are as crowded as in a populous city, where every foot of ground becomes of importance.

The town contains many shops of different kinds, which supply the mountaineers and the people of the adjacent country with articles in common demand.

It is also the seat of some manufactures. The principal one is that of tanning, which is favoured by the contiguity of the extensive woods of oak along the shores of the lake. A species of strong coarse linen is made there called *bundle* linen, from an old Irish measure of fourteen inches, of that name, by which it is commonly sold ; and also, probably, from its breadth being regulated by the same standard. In some parts of the county of Cork there has been a great demand for this narrow linen for exportation to the West Indies, where it is employed in making cinctures for the slaves. A branch of the cotton manufactory was also established some years ago ; but the machinery was not of the most approved construction ; its progress was slow ; and the death of one of the principal proprietors occasioned its decline.

Such crowds of people flock into the town on a market-day, that it is difficult to pass through the streets ; and on Sundays, and the numerous holidays of the Roman Catholic church, most of which are religiously observed, the streets are not less thronged. The latter days seem more especially appropriated to the purchase of finery for the females, and the shops are kept half open to supply them.

Killarney is the residence of the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese : his chapel is spacious, and mass is celebrated in it with much pomp. In its vicinity stands a convent for nuns, who appear to de-

vote the principal part of their time to the education of young persons of their own sex.

Irish is very generally spoken in the town ; and many of the inhabitants, equally with those in the wilder parts of the county, are unacquainted with any other language : English, however, is becoming every year more prevalent. Notwithstanding the long neglect of this latter tongue, it is asserted that Latin has been very generally studied in Kerry, even by the lowest ranks of the people ; and I have heard more than one gentleman bear testimony to the circumstance of bare-footed boys having been found reading classical authors in the fields. It is related of one of these poor fellows, that, upon an expostulation having been made with him on such an unprofitable use of his time, he replied, with much spirit,—

“ Est quodam prodire tenus, si non datur ultra.”

“ Classical reading,” says Dr Smith, in his History of Kerry, “ extends itself even to a fault amongst the lower and poorer kinds of this country ; many of whom, to the taking them off more useful work, have greater knowledge in this way than some of the better sort of other places. Neither is the genius of the commonalty confined to this kind of learning alone ; for I saw a poor man, near Blackstones, who had a tolerable notion of calculating the epacts, golden numbers, dominical letter, the moon’s phases, and

even eclipses, although he had never been taught to read English.” Similar testimony is borne by other writers :—“ In alighting to take a view of the ancient family-seat at Pallice, I gave the bridle of my horse to a poor boy, who seemed to look for it with eagerness. From his manner of answering some questions I asked him, I was led to inquire into his situation ; and was not a little surprised to find that, though sunk in the most abject poverty, he was, nevertheless, a good classical scholar. He was well acquainted with the best Latin poets ; had read over most of the historians ; and was then busy with the Orations of Cicero. I found, upon further inquiry, that this classical spirit is very general among the lower sort of people in Kerry.”—*Description of Killarney.*—*Anonymous.*

These accounts, however, are either much exaggerated, or the taste for classical learning is less prevalent than it was formerly ; for, notwithstanding my earnest endeavours during the time I continued in Kerry, I was unable to procure an interview with one of these learned peasants. A gentleman of my acquaintance, indeed, who was with me at Killarney, once happened to be present when a poor boy came into the inn yard, and asked for alms in Latin ; and he observed that several of the towns-folk, who were by-standers, replied to him in that language, and, for some minutes, continued the conversation with appa-

rent facility. But that some knowledge of Latin should obtain in a place where the service of the prevailing religion is performed in that language, is not very extraordinary ; and, in almost every part of Ireland, poor boys, the offspring of mean, though ambitious parents, are occasionally met with, who have been instructed in that language for the purpose of qualifying them at a future period for the priesthood.

There are three inns at Killarney ; but the accommodations they afford are not, on the whole, calculated to induce strangers to remain beyond the period that is absolutely necessary to gratify their curiosity. This I may illustrate by stating that not one of them, as late as the year 1806, afforded a coach-house ; so that, if it were not for the permission commonly granted to strangers, of having their carriages put into one of those attached to the residence of Lord Kenmare, there would be no alternative but leaving them exposed to the weather. As the inns are not sufficiently spacious to admit the great number of strangers who resort to the town during the summer months, the proprietors of private houses find an advantage in having apartments for hire ; and those who reside in them can have every necessary for the table supplied with tolerable neatness and regularity, and at a very moderate expense, from the inn. It is much to be regretted that there is no place of public accommodation, not even a single house, on the con-

finer of the lake, where apartments can be procured ; for, independent of the inconvenience of going and returning, some disgust is liable to be felt at the sudden transition from the rural and sequestered scenery of the lake to the hurry and bustle of a noisy town, which is always crowded with idle people, and among whom beggars, as in every place of public resort in Ireland, bear a very conspicuous proportion. In this respect it is that Killarney appears so much less attractive than the lakes of the north of England ; it affords none of those delightful retreats which abound in the latter country ; and which invite the passing stranger to tarry and examine the surrounding scenery at leisure ; on the contrary, while the eye is allured by the charms of nature, the mind is continually distressed and perplexed by the difficulties which are interposed to the enjoyment of the scene by the neglect and indolence of the inhabitants.

I shall now proceed to give a brief account of the different routes to Killarney, beginning at Limerick, Mallow, and Cork, through one or other of which places almost every stranger passes in going thither.

Limerick affords the shortest route from Dublin, and from the northern parts of the kingdom ; and from this place three distinct roads branch off to Killarney, which differ only a few miles in length. The first runs along the banks of the Shannon as far as Ballylongford, and thence through Listowel and Tra-

lee : the second through the midst of the mountains, by Newcastle, Abbey-feale, and Castle island : the third by Bruff, Kilmallock, and Charleville, through Mallow, where it unites with another road.

If either of the two first roads from Limerick is selected, the traveller should proceed to Adare, on account of the several curious ruins at that place. It is beautifully situated in the midst of an improved wooded country, and was once a large town, but is now reduced to a miserable village, which derives its only consequence from the remains of antiquity, and its contiguity to the noble park of Lord Adare. The river Maig flows through the park and village, with a smooth but strong current : on its banks, near the bridge, are seen the ruins of the ancient castle that formerly defended the town, and which still preserves its insular situation, being surrounded by deep and broad moats, filled by water from the river. It once resisted a very long siege ; and, when the garrison was supposed to be on the point of surrendering, a vigorous sally, inspired by the despair of famine, carried confusion into the ranks of the assailants, and raised the blockade. In the wars of Desmond, however, notwithstanding the apparent strength of the fortifications, it was taken and retaken many different times.

The most interesting of the ruins are the abbeys, whose lofty quadrangular towers, rising above the

summits of the ancient trees by which they are enveloped, produce a most delightful effect. The largest and most perfect of these edifices stands in the park of Lord Adare, and forms a noble embellishment to his improvements. In the cloister of it there are some curious pieces of ancient sculpture, and several of the windows are decorated with escutcheons, bearing alternately a cross and saltier. In the style of all these buildings a striking similarity is observable, particularly in their tall square steeples. The oldest of them is in the Trinitarian abbey, or friary, which was founded in the reign of Edward the First, for the redemption of Christian captives : belonging to it there were friars of the order of St Augustine ; preaching friars ; and grey friars. The Augustinian friary, the next in point of age, was founded in the year 1315 ; and the Grey friary, of which there only remains the steeple, in 1465.* These abbeys were all extremely rich ; and, in the enumeration of their possessions, which were granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Henry Wallop, mention is made of their houses, tenements, burgages, parks, gardens, arable and pasture lands, water-mills, fishing-weirs, &c. The Grey friary was the most wealthy of all : besides having three parks, gardens, lands, &c. &c., it enjoyed

* Archdall's Monasticon Hib.

not only the tithes of Adare, but also those of twenty-seven other towns.

The road along the Shannon does not afford a continued prospect of that river ; and, when seen, it is rather to be admired for its great breadth and majestic windings, than for its picturesque beauty. The country on each side is generally hilly and open. The most agreeable views on the river are at the mouths of some of the streams which fall into it, where one may occasionally see an old castle, surrounded with the huts of fishermen, and shaded by a few trees.

The first inn at which the traveller can stop with any satisfaction, is that at Tarbort, the neatness of which, on my first visit, was extraordinary.

Listowel, though a considerable town, yields the very worst accommodation. The market-place forms a spacious square, and derives an air of importance from the gateway of the old castle, which stands between two lofty round towers, occupying one side of the square. The castle extended from this entrance along the brow of the hill, and nearly overhung the river ; but its walls are now quite in ruins. Between this place and the Shannon, the road crosses a bog of great extent : afterwards it passes through a cultivated country ; but there is nothing very interesting in the scenery until it reaches the mountains beyond Tralee, where a distant prospect of Killarney is disclosed.

Tralee is a very thriving town, in which many new

houses have lately been erected : it contains an inn with commodious apartments, but cleanliness and regularity were not to be enumerated amongst its recommendations.

The accommodations along the second road from Limerick through Newcastle and Abbey-feale, are still worse than on that which has already been mentioned. Indeed, when I passed it in the year 1804, it did not afford a single inn fit to receive a female habituated to the conveniences and comforts of civilized life. We observed, however, that they were building a new inn at Abbey-feale. This road is very liable to be injured by mountain torrents ; when we travelled it, it was barely passable for a carriage. The country through which it runs is wild, but not interesting ; and the lake is not seen beyond the distance of five or six miles.

The chief inducement for selecting the third route from Limerick, by the way of Kilmallock, is to see the extraordinary ruins of that place, which has been styled the Balbec or Palmyra of Ireland ; and certainly, so far as a contrast between former magnificence and present misery contributes to the parallel, it may be said to bear a striking resemblance to the remains of those once celebrated cities of the east.

Kilmallock was the capital of Desmond's dominions ; and as he was the most wealthy, and, at the same time, the most powerful subject in the kingdom,

so this his largest city was distinguished above every other, by the beauty and splendour of its edifices. It is said to have contained numerous castles, churches, and abbeys, besides many extensive palaces of marble ; and the generality of the houses, also built of hewn stone, were placed with regularity along the lines of straight and spacious streets. A lofty wall, strengthened at intervals by towers, defended the city on every side, and each gate, or entrance, was protected by a castle. Tradition relates, that when the commander of the parliamentary army entered Kilmallock, he was so struck with its uncommon beauty, that, contrary to the dictates of that cruel policy which had led to the destruction of every fortified town, and every castle and habitation of the Irish, he resolved to spare the place : but having afterwards learned that nearly the whole of the inhabitants bore the same name, he judged it imprudent to leave so powerful a confederacy in quiet possession of their property ; and, adding another to the numerous examples of vengeance which had already been exercised to strike terror into the enemy, he gave orders to demolish the city.

Only one of the castellated gates yet continues entire, and the limits of the walls and fortifications can no longer be traced ; but of the ancient town sufficient still remains, to shew that it must have displayed a scene of wealth and splendour superior in its day

to every other place in Ireland. The most remarkable of all the ruins, because the most uncommon, are the remains of a wide street with a range of houses on each side, the walls of which, built of hewn limestone, appear as fresh as the day they were finished. The plans of these houses are nearly all the same. They present two or more gable ends to the street, and are divided into three stories. The entrances, by spacious portals with semicircular arches, open into small halls, which communicate with broad passages, that probably contained the stairs, whence there are doorways leading to the principal apartments. The windows, of a square form, and small in proportion to the size of the rooms, are divided into compartments by one or more uprights, and sometimes by a cross of stone. The chimney-pieces are large and lofty, and the fire-places calculated for containing huge piles of wood. All the ornaments are of a very simple kind; and, from dates carved on some of them, it appears that they were sculptured during the reign of Elizabeth. As the walls were quite firm, these houses, at a moderate expense, might be converted into very comfortable dwellings: a few of them have been partially repaired in a clumsy manner, and are actually inhabited; but the greater part lie quite neglected, or are converted into receptacles for cattle, and for manure. Within some, we found huts of the very poorest description, built in the corners of the

principal ground apartments, inhabited by people whose squalid aspect bespoke the utmost misery.

The town at present occupies the brow of a small hill, at the bottom of which runs a stream ; but it is probable that it once, also, extended along the opposite bank, as the remains of several spacious religious buildings are observable there. It is the fate of these edifices to be exposed to still greater injury than those in the town ; the walls being broken down, and the stones carried away, whenever the inhabitants of the adjacent district are in want of materials for a house or a fence.

The cloister of one of the largest abbeys has been converted into a farm-yard, and the piazza around it into stalls for bullocks. Here, half covered with a heap of dirt, I found a sculptured stone, probably the remains of a tomb, with an inscription to commemorate the death of three young men, brothers, who were slain in the civil wars during the year 1642.*

* This epitaph, evidently written in hexameter and pentameter verses, is inscribed on the stone, without any attention to the proper terminations of the lines. Two alone, the first and fifth, are correctly engraved ; of the others, some begin in the middle of the verses, and some even with the latter syllables of words, for which there was not sufficient space in the preceding line. It should stand thus :—

1642.

Tertia lux cæsos memorat Septembris in anno

Quam legis ; heu ! nondum tres tenet urna senes.]

In the centre of the chancel of the church, belonging to the same abbey, stands a tomb in tolerable preservation, which a Latin inscription denotes to be that of the White Knights. Many other interesting

Marte novo * fratresque ruunt tria pignora justa :
 Jus patriæ causam, Rexque, Fidesque probant.
 Integer attritis reperitur candor in extis
 Virginis, et veri purpura marturii.
 Lilia purpureos inter sudantia fluctus
 Tres meruere. Trium nomina marmor habet.
 Fratres—Georgius
 Alexander } Burgate.
 Nep * * *

“ The third day of September, in the year which you read, records these slain ; alas ! the urn contains three men not yet old. Brothers and three just pledges, (*children*,) they fall in a new war. The king and religion approve the right and the cause of the country. The untainted purity of a virgin is found in their worn-out remains, and the purple (*blood*) of a real martyrdom. The three merited lilies† exhaling (*odours*) amidst the bloody waves. This marble preserves their name,

George
 Alexander } Burgate.”
 Nep * * *

The Burgates took an active part in the great rebellion of 1641, and were consequently involved in the contentions which followed. Amongst the depositions relative to the year 1641, existing in MS. in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, it appears that John Burgate, Esq. of Kilmallock, was an officer of the Irish army. In July, 1642, he was present when the Irish took from Lady Elizabeth Dowdall, of Kilfinny, her castle : he was also present, with several thousand

* Substituted in lieu of the corrupt word, *marteneros*, which appears on the stone.

† The lily was an emblem of martyrdom.

relics of antiquity are doubtless to be seen at Kilmallock ; but, as I only stopped there for a few hours, and was prevented by torrents of rain from taking more than a very slight view of the town, I am unable to give a fuller account of it. In the *Monasticon Hibernicum*, Kilmallock is only slightly mentioned, and I have never met with a detailed description of its ruins.

The misery of Kilmallock is to be attributed, seemingly, to the total want of manufactures, and to the land of the surrounding country being almost wholly devoted to grazing bullocks. The peasantry are few, and their condition abject. Indeed, throughout this district, man seems to derive less benefit from the bountiful gifts of nature, than the beasts which repose in the luxuriant meadows. The roads through

rebels, at the taking of the castle of Croom, in the county of Limerick ; which last was given to him in custody. It appears also, that the battle of Liscarrol, a place about twelve miles distant from Kilmallock, was fought between the English and Irish armies on the 3d of September, 1642 ; in which the latter were routed, according to the manuscript account, with the loss of eight hundred men killed ; whilst twelve only were killed on the part of the English. I am indebted for these illustrations to an ingenious and learned member of the university of Dublin.

The epitaph is a striking proof that the Irish considered the rebellion of 1641, and the subsequent wars, to be the common cause of the country, approved of by the king, (Charles I.) and sanctioned by religion : and the publicity of the monument on which it was inscribed, serves to shew the weakness of the English interest in this part of the country for some time afterwards.

this country are good ; but the inns between Limerick and Mallow are all of the very poorest description.

Mallow is beautifully situated on the rich banks of the river Blackwater, in the centre of a district, which is embellished with numerous gentlemen's seats. The place is celebrated for a spring, which throws up an abundant supply of very pure water, resembling that of the hot-wells near Bristol. It is much resorted to by invalids from the southern parts of Ireland, who labour under consumptions and other complaints.

Public rooms are opened here in the season for the recreation of the visitors ; but the improvement of the town is strangely neglected ; and a place which might easily be rendered extremely attractive, at present holds out few inducements, except the natural salubrity of its air and water.

From Mallow to Killarney, the road runs for some miles along the banks of the Blackwater, through a country highly improved and well wooded ; but, as it advances, the scenery becomes less interesting, and, in the vicinity of the village of Mill-street, about fifteen miles from Killarney, it enters a bleak and mountainous region. Mill-street is situated at the junction of the Cork and Mallow roads ; and, being a place of great thoroughfare, it affords much business to a considerable inn, which has hitherto been one of the very best in the country. Hence to Killarney the

road passes alternately over bogs and mountains, and the country affords little that is pleasing, until a view of the lake is discovered from the mountains at the distance of a few miles. From Cork to Mill-street the road is still more dreary, passing over mountains, where, for many miles, no human beings are seen but the drivers of the numerous horses which are employed in transporting butter from Kerry. Yet, bleak and dreary as this country now appears, a century, it is said, has scarcely elapsed, since the whole of it was so thickly covered with wood, that, to use the expression of those from whom I received the account, a squirrel could go from Killarney to Cork by leaping from bough to bough.

The road through Mill-street is the direct one from Cork to Killarney ; but there are several others which are far more agreeable in point of scenery : as by Bandon, Bantry, &c. My first excursion to Killarney was made from Cork, along the sea coast ; and, as it afforded a view of a part of the country, which, though rarely visited, abounds in objects of interest and curiosity, I shall devote the following and concluding section to a few observations that were made during the journey.

SECTION V.

THE first town which we came to on the coast was Kinsale, situated at the distance of fourteen miles from Cork ; a place of great antiquity, and celebrated in the annals of Irish history for having withstood various sieges. William the Third, indignant at its resistance to his forces, ordered its strong walls and fortifications, on the land side, to be destroyed ; those towards the sea, however, were not only suffered to remain entire, but even strengthened. The town is built on an elevated bank at the head of an inlet of the sea, which affords one of the most safe and commodious harbours on the coast ; and it contains the only king's dock-yard in Ireland. From the water, the houses have an agreeable appearance, rising above each other in stages from the bottom to the very summit of the bank. The streets are very narrow, and the precipitous ascents and descents render them still more incommodious. Many ancient houses still remain inhabited, which exhibit specimens of architecture totally different from what is observable

in any of the towns on the eastern coast of the kingdom ; in each story, to the front, there are balconies, or little galleries, which occupy the centre of the house, and communicate at each extremity with large bowed windows. There are several remains of castles and religious buildings in different parts of the town, but none of the ruins are remarkable for their picturesque appearance. The town and liberties contain near seven thousand acres, and are governed by a sovereign and a recorder.

From Kinsale to Clonikelty, the road runs through a country agreeably diversified with hill and valley, affording, at intervals, several pleasing prospects of the sea. Clonikelty was once, it is said, a place of considerable trade, and returned two members to the Irish parliament ; but the entrance to the harbour having been obstructed by the accumulation of sand, its trade declined : * the houses, though numerous, are in general of a poor description.

At the distance of a few miles from Clonikelty, stands Castle Freke, the seat of Lord Carbery, beautifully situated on the sea shore, which is here indent-

* The Rev. Mr Townsend, author of the late statistical survey of Cork, published 1810, has informed me, since the above was written, that the bar at the mouth of the harbour has not undergone any material alteration for the last twenty-five years ; that the trade of the place has increased within his recollection, and that the number of houses is greater now than at any former period.

ed by bold promontories formed of craggy rocks, whose dark colour affords a striking contrast to those of the green and transparent waves of the Atlantic, which roll against them. These rocks are rendered still more romantic, by the vast caverns worn in them by the attrition of the water. At the base of the cliffs lies a sandy beach, where, at certain seasons, immense numbers of people are employed, during low water, in collecting sea-weed for manure ; which is drifted in as well by eddies and currents as by the regular influx of the tide.

That the accumulation of the weed is not entirely dependent on the flood-tide, is obvious from the circumstance of trees of foreign growth having been in several instances washed in along with it. Soon after the building of Castle-Freke was commenced, one of these trees, of enormous size, was drifted into the bay : the smaller branches had been all beaten off by the waves ; and the stem was thickly covered with barnacles, a proof of its having been long at sea : its interior part, however, was perfectly sound, and a beautiful floor in the castle was formed of the boards which it produced : it was of the pine tribe, and of the growth, as was conjectured, of South America.*

* At the town of Beerhaven, in Bantry-bay, we saw part of a vast tree which had been drifted on the shore there in a similar manner. After two long pieces had been cut off at the butt-end, the stem was

Besides the sea-weed, another valuable species of manure is procured upon this shore, which is very generally used in the adjoining district, and occasionally is carried to a distance exceeding twelve miles. It consists of a sand formed of shells of various descriptions, finely comminuted, and slightly intermixed with small grains of quartz, and it is found on one bank alone. Sometimes this bank is nearly exhausted ; but the first storm never fails to replenish it with a fresh supply of the same valuable material. The sand is sprinkled on the ground with the hand ; and if plentifully disseminated, its beneficial effects will be observed for seven or eight years. Its value has been long known to individuals in the neighbourhood ; but we were informed it had not been in general use for more than three or four years preceding our visit at Castle-Freke in the 1800. It would be impossible to have a manure better adapted to the stiff argillaceous soil of this country.*

still nearly six feet in diameter. The wood was a pale yellow colour, and so hard, that, although timber is remarkably scarce in that part of the country, no person would be at the pains, owing to the great labour it required, to saw off another piece ; and it had lain for some time neglected on the beach.

* The shape and the extent of sand-banks on the sea-shore are very commonly altered by storms, and particularly during high tides ; but I have lately been informed, that the one at Clonikelty undergoes no change. Let the weather be ever so calm, the water ever so low, and the numbers who resort to it for manure ever so great, like the purse of Fortunatus, the bank always affords an undiminish-

A ruinous practice prevailed here, of abandoning the land for some years to the care of nature, after it had been totally exhausted by repeated crops of corn. Nothing could be more wretched, in consequence, than the appearance of many of the fields : the stiff clay, dried by the heat of the sun, and split into deep fissures, seemed in some instances to have lost the power of vegetation, and in others yielded merely a few tufts of noxious weeds and unprofitable grass : yet in these fields the miserable ewes, whose milk forms a principal part of the food of the people during summer, were left to pick a scanty sustenance ; fettered, too, in order to prevent them from wandering in search of more palatable and nourishing food.

Sir John Freke, now Lord Carbery, took great pains to point out the impolicy of this system, and to introduce the culture of clover and artificial grasses. No clover seed, it was answered, could be procured in the country. He himself took the pains of importing it, and distributed it in small quantities amongst the petty farmers. It was carefully sown. Each individual was delighted with the result, and expressed the greatest obligation for the valuable communication

ed supply. The same gentleman has assured me, that the manure sand has, to his knowledge, been in high reputation these forty years ; and that on some lands it is spread very thickly.

and friendly assistance : but, strange to tell, notwithstanding the most decided advantage had been gained from this new system of husbandry, notwithstanding also a quantity of seed had been imported for sale into a neighbouring town, not one of these people would repeat the experiment. To find a solution for the motives of this conduct, so militant against the common principles that regulate the feelings of mankind, may appear an arduous task ; but the truth is, that the lower classes of the Irish cannot at once banish from their recollection the traditions of ancient oppression, and are with difficulty persuaded that any measure decidedly beneficial to them can be adopted, or recommended, solely for their advantage. They are prone to suspect some sinister purpose in every effort to improve their condition, by which, ultimately, they may be compelled to pay a higher rent, and toil more laboriously. Influenced by this prevailing principle, they appear unwilling to deviate from the beaten track in which their forefathers trod ; and often assume an appearance of misery and poverty, to enjoy, as they imagine, a proportionable degree of security. The generous landholder, therefore, who commiserates their abject state, should not be deterred, by the ill success which attends his first benevolent efforts, from persevering in his plan ; or attribute to brutal incapacity that reluctance to receive

advice, which may be accounted for without impeaching either the hearts or understanding of the people. In numerous instances, the condition of the Irish peasants has certainly been materially meliorated of late years by the influence and example of men of liberal minds; and it is ardently to be hoped, that a system at once calculated to afford benefit to the landlord, comfort to the tenant, and prosperity and peace to the country, may be more freely adopted and widely diffused.*

* In the late statistical survey of Cork, alluded to in the preceding pages, the reverend author has quoted this passage, and he adds, "that it is hard to say, whether text or comment betray most marks of ignorance and misconception; that the account of this district, communicated by a person born in its vicinity, long acquainted with the manners and language, sufficiently exposes the *falsehood* of a statement, which, indeed, it would be almost impossible to credit, were there no other commentator than its own absurdity." (Page 283.) That "to find a solution for difficulties that exist only in the author's imagination, is an undertaking savouring somewhat of Quixotism; it reminds one of the renowned knight's ingenuity in creating giants for the purpose of conquering them," &c. &c. He further tells his readers, that "Mr W—— passed only one night at Castle-Freke, on his way to Killarney, and might possibly have mistaken the dreams of the pillow for the conversation of the parlour."

Notwithstanding these, and many other remarks of a similar tendency, I have resolved to leave the passage as it originally stood, because, as I verily believe, the castle was not enchanted, and I cannot distrust the evidence of my own senses. Though but one night at Castle-Freke, I spent two whole mornings in rambling along the coast; one of them under the very polite and friendly guidance of Lord Carbery. I trod upon several of the fields which I described;

From Castle-Freke we proceeded to Ross, a small town situated at the head of the bay of the same name, chiefly remarkable for its ancient celebrity ; for it is said to have been once the seat of an univer-

and obtained the information, which I detailed respecting them, from that very source to which Mr Townsend would fain refer me as being the most authentic. This gentleman, indeed, admits in his book, that Lord Carbery's endeavours to extend the culture of clover were not equal to his lordship's wishes ; but, he says, I could have learned nothing more on the subject : It would be very idle to dispute this point ; it is quite sufficient to my purpose, to be able to state, that the most laudable exertions on the part of an enlightened and benevolent resident landlord were not wanting to introduce an improved system of agriculture into the country, and yet, notwithstanding such exertions, numerous fields, in the year 1800, presented the appearance which I have described.

With regard to the solution which I have offered, it is possible I may be much mistaken. The unwillingness usually found amongst the lower orders of people, in almost every country, to depart from old customs, may, perhaps, in itself, sufficiently account for the negligent conduct which I have noticed ; but I have seen so many instances to confirm me in the opinion, that I am satisfied a large portion of the Irish peasantry, in declining the adoption of new and better practices in agriculture, as well as other things, are actuated, not only by the vulgar prejudices common to them with other people, but also by fear and suspicion, lest the instruction proffered to them with seeming benevolence should have originated in very different sentiments, and be intended, eventually, more for the interest of the *adviser* than the *advised*. Is it possible to believe that the penalties and restrictions of those execrable laws, which disgraced the statute books during the greater part of the last century, have had no influence on the moral conduct of the people ? Is it possible to suppose their baneful effect would cease the moment that they were repealed ? No ; the waves of the ocean continue turbulent long after the blast which put them into motion has subsided.

sity, which was resorted to by all the youth of distinguished families in the south of Ireland : it still continues to be a bishop's see, united to that of Cork ; a cathedral was founded here as early as the sixth century.

From Ross we proceeded to Baltimore, by the way of Castle-Townsend and Skibbereen.

The prevailing stone of this district is a dark argillaceous schistus, somewhat similar to that at Clonikelty : siliceous schistus, intersected by veins of quartz, and quartz coated with chlorite, are also common ; but there is no calcareous stone whatsoever. Inquiring, as we advanced, if any minerals of peculiar variety or value had been discovered in the neighbourhood, we were informed that silver ore had been found in several different places ; and that a family, resident near the Priest's Leap, between Ross and Castle Townsend, had, from time to time, gathered small quantities of it, which had been manufactured for them by a silversmith at Cork, into spoons and other articles of domestic use : the source was kept

Mr Townsend says, he is persuaded that Mr W—— will rejoice to find that clover, so far from being discontinued in this quarter, is rising in repute, notwithstanding its increase in price. I do indeed rejoice at it, and at every improvement in my native land ; nor did I ever entertain a doubt that the laudable endeavours which were made to introduce the culture of that valuable plant, would, sooner or later, be attended with the happiest result.

a profound secret. That the precious metals were formerly found in great abundance in different parts of Ireland is evident, as well from the great number of valuable golden ornaments that have been found beneath the surface of the earth, as from the testimony both of Irish and foreign historians. Giraldus Cambrensis describes the island, in his time, as abounding with gold; and, in a memoir by M. De-larue, on the History of Caen, in Normandy, it is stated, that, by order of the Norman princes, 23,730 marks of silver had been transmitted to that city from the English exchequer; besides 400 *marks and 200 ounces of gold from Ireland*. The late discovery of native gold on Croaghan mountain,* on the bor-

* The discovery of gold on this mountain was first made public in the month of September, 1795, by the quarrel of two men to whom the secret had been known for some time previously. Thousands of people instantly flocked to the place, whose researches were attended with various success. Amongst others, a young boy was attracted to the spot. Watching his opportunity whilst a party of men were reposing after a long and unavailing search, he stole into the pit which they had dug, and, groping at the bottom, immediately drew out a piece of gold of the value of 20*l*. On being seen, he was driven away from the place: no suspicions, however, were entertained of his good fortune, and he succeeded in depositing his prize in the hands of a gentleman of the country. On being told the value, and consulted how it was to be employed, he instantly requested, of his own accord, that a cow might be bought for his widowed mother, and he himself bound apprentice to a carpenter. A more judicious disposal could not have been made, and his wishes were faithfully complied with. I heard this anecdote on the spot from unquestionable authority.

ders of the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, is a strong corroboration of these accounts; and it may reasonably be presumed that there are many sources of the precious metals in the country with which we still remain unacquainted.

It was calculated that 800 ounces, valued at £3 : 15 per ounce, were found by the peasantry in the course of six weeks. One piece was taken up weighing 22 ounces, the largest ever found in Europe; and, strange to say, this most valuable and curious specimen, after having been offered in vain for sale to several cabinets, was consigned to the melting-pot. In the month of October, a military force was sent by government to take possession of the place, more for the purpose of tranquillizing the country, by dispersing the crowds, than asserting the claims of the crown. In the following year, however, a commission, formed of Messrs. Mills and Weaver, proprietors of the Gronebanc copper-mine, and Mr King, a magistrate of the county, was appointed to direct the further search; under whose guidance the works have ever since been most prudently and skillfully conducted. The account of the expenditure and receipts from the commencement of the works until June, 1801, stood as follows :

<i>Dr.</i>	<i>Cr.</i>
To labour - - £1678 16 7	By native gold raised, 599 oz.
Materials - - - 296 18 6	7 dwt. 8 gr. - £2259 9 11
Incidentals - - - 92 17 2	By value of houses,
Commission to direct-	sheds, implements,
ors - - - - 206 17 3	&c. - - - - ———
<u>£2275 9 6</u>	

Since that period, gold has not been found in sufficient quantities to compensate for the labour of the search; and money has been received from government to prosecute the works.

Croaghan is a very extensive mountain, and somewhat more than 2000 feet high. Near its summit there is a bog, the source of three streams, which unite during their course down the mountain. The

In the scenery of this district there is nothing peculiarly interesting, until a view opens of Castle-Townsend-haven, an inlet of the sea, about a mile in breadth, which extends a considerable distance up

first gold was found in a ford on the united streams, near the base of the mountain; and here the commissioners began their search, by re-washing the sand and gravel which had been turned up by the peasantry. The machinery used for that purpose was of the most approved and ingenious kind; of course, much gold was found that had before escaped notice. That the gold must have been washed down the mountain was obvious, both from its external appearance, and from the circumstance of its being found in the largest quantities in those places where the course of the stream was obstructed by ledges of rock; the works, therefore, were continued upwards; but, as they ascended, the gold became more rare, and the mass of earth under which it lay proved so deep, that the expense of removing it considerably exceeded the gains. Trials were, therefore, made in other places, by cutting transverse trenches, and sinking pits down to the surface of the rock; and wherever these trials were made, whether above the ford or below it, whether on the river side of the mountain or on the opposite one, gold was discovered, but in such minute quantities as neither to pay for the search, nor give any encouragement to prosecute the works at one place in preference to another. Even at the distance of many miles from the mountain, in the river Aughrim, which receives the auriferous stream, small particles of gold were discovered; and I was lately informed by Captain Mills, that it had been found near the head of the river Liffey, sixteen miles distant from Croaghan, in another direction, under circumstances of a very extraordinary nature. A gentleman had caught a trout in that river; its belly was much swelled, and evidently by some hard substance; the fish was opened, and the lump proved to be a small piece of native gold, which the animal must have swallowed when raised from the bottom by some eddy during a flood.

With the gold there has also been found on Croaghan mountain magnetic iron ore, iron ochre, brown and red iron stone, specular

the country. It resembles in appearance a large river issuing from the hills, and winding through a country richly wooded, until it mingles its waters with those of the Atlantic, amidst a cluster of rocky

iron ore, martial and arsenical pyrites, quartz containing chlorite, wolfram, grey ore of manganese ; and, more valuable than all, fragments of crystallized tinstone. That the latter substance would, sooner or later, be discovered in the county of Wicklow, Captain Mills had long before expressed his firm conviction, in consequence of the very striking similarity of many parts of that county to Cornwall.

After a mature consideration of the various circumstances, it was recommended by the commissioners, in their report to government on the state of the works, to have a level driven through the very heart of the mountain. This level is now carrying on, in the most judicious manner, under the skilful directions of Messrs. Mills and Weaver, and it is to be hoped that it will lead to some valuable discoveries. As no more than two or three men can work at a time, and parts of the rock are exceedingly hard, the progress of it is necessarily very slow. The cost, in a national point of view, is trifling ; and although it should not lead to any discovery of gold, yet, as the mountain abounds with a variety of valuable minerals, it is extremely probable that the level may prove useful to other mines that may be worked hereafter ; in which case, the tolls that might justly be levied for the right of passage through it, would more than repay for the original cost. A minute and interesting account of this mountain, of the first discovery of the gold, and of the proceedings of the commissioners, together with a discussion of the probability of finding additional sources of the precious metals, may be seen in the *Philosophical Transactions*, and in those of the Dublin Society.

Since the above was written, the commissioners received orders from government to abandon the works. Thousands of the peasantry, eager to try their fortunes, immediately flocked to the place. They dug in various directions with indefatigable diligence ; and, having observed the method practised by the regular workmen, they washed the earth in the same manner, and with considerable dexte-

islands. The town and castle from which the haven takes its name, are situated amongst the woods on the western bank, where the water is so very deep, that the ships which frequent the place ride at anchor close to the shore, with their masts and bowsprits nearly in contact with the branches of the trees. The transparency of the water is very remarkable ; at the depth of several fathoms we could distinctly perceive the pebbles which lay at the bottom : in many of the other inlets of this rocky coast the water, though quite salt, is not less clear than it is at Castle-Townsend.

Skibbereen is a thriving town, situated on a navigable river which flows into Baltimore bay. The great contrast between the wretched cabins of the old part of the town and the substantial habitations which have been lately built, is a striking proof of the benefits which the place has derived from commerce. The trade chiefly consists in the exportation

rity. The great multitude toiled in vain ; but a few were repaid very amply for their laborious search ; and the golden prize, thus obtained, induced others to persevere : each day brought additional crowds. The commissioners, aware of the consequence of an abandonment, had previously remonstrated against it, but their opinion was disregarded. At last, however, after several weeks of general idleness throughout the neighbouring districts, it was found expedient to resume the possession, and to station a military guard to keep off the people, and oblige them to return to their accustomed habits of regular industry.

of grain, butter, and salted fish ; and in the importation of iron, deals, timber, salt, groceries, &c. This place called to our recollection the old story of an Irish servant, who, being asked, on arriving in London, what he thought of that city, replied, that *London appeared a mighty good sort of a place, but was nothing at all to Skibbereen* ; and, indeed, Skibbereen in some respects stands unparalleled ; for we found whole streets in it formed of cabins without chimneys, situated at the bottom of a deep trench or ditch : yet the inhabitants of these hovels were healthy and cheerful ; and, in the evening, we saw numerous groups of girls singing and dancing with uncommon vivacity and regularity,* amidst the clouds of smoke which issue from the doors.

Irish is so generally spoken in this part of the country, that, at Skibbereen, we found it expedient to learn a few phrases in that language, for the purpose of inquiring the way, and asking the names of places which we passed.

To the south of Skibbereen the country is diversified by numerous hills, which are devoted to pasturage, and remain nearly in a state of nature, covered with rocks and heath ; the lesser valleys also, deemed unfit for tillage, are left in the same neglected con-

* It is a notorious fact, that many of the Irish peasants take lessons in dancing from itinerant teachers.

dition. After having passed for some miles through these wild valleys, where little appeared to interest the attention, we were most agreeably surprised by the sudden view of an extensive basin of water surrounded by lofty hills. Its form was nearly circular, and in the centre stood an island, where the ruins of an old castle, over-run with ivy, towered above a pile of rocks.

Desirous of examining it more closely, we hastened towards some men who were hauling a boat on the beach, and were endeavouring to prevail on them to launch it once more, when an elderly gentleman accosted us, and told us the boat belonged to him ; he added, at the same time, that it was much at our service, and that, if we were willing to wait until he went as far as his house, he would himself accompany us. We gladly accepted his offer, and, after a few minutes, embarked together. This curious piece of water, called Lough Ine, communicates with the ocean by a narrow rocky channel, concealed between the hills, through which the tide flows. It abounds with every sort of fish that is found on the coast, and in particualar with oysters of an excellent kind, which we could distinctly perceive in the sand near the island, at the depth of three fathoms. Here the boat was moored, the dredge prepared, and, in a few minutes, an abundance of these rare oysters procured. Our friendly guide had returned from his house, at-

tended by a boy carrying a basket ; and we now discovered that it contained every necessary to afford us an agreeable repast. Copious libations were poured from bottles which had evidently been filled in France, and the wine proved to be nothing less than Burgundy of a most delicious flavour.*

Our host informed us that the castle was once the residence of his ancestors, who were lords of the surrounding country ; and he gave an admirable description of the former beauty of the lough, when the hills by which it was environed were clothed to the summit with lofty trees. Into the history of the vicissitudes of a family once so wealthy and powerful, it was no time to inquire ; we could only lament that one, in whom the hospitable spirit of the old Irish chieftain shone forth so conspicuously, should have limits assigned to its most ample exercise. On regaining the main shore, for the first time, he begged to know our names ; and, though unacquainted with any one of them, gave us a warm invitation to his house ; but, being under the necessity of declining further favours, we bade him farewell, with cordial thanks for his hospitality and politeness.†

* In times of peace, French wine is common on the western coast of Ireland.

† A reverend gentleman was pleased to say, that, in the neighbourhood of Skibbereen, he fears this story should be laughed at as a quiz ;—that *wine* was not, to his own knowledge, the usual beve-

Soon after leaving Lough Ine, we came within sight of the bay of Baltimore, upon whose border the road runs for some miles before it reaches the town. The bay is very beautiful, studded with islands of various size, and bounded by a range of lofty hills, which terminate on the coast in a bold promontory. Beyond it appear other promontories still more lofty, amongst which is seen, in the distance, Mizen-head, the Notium of Ptolemy, the most southern point of land in Ireland ;* woods alone are wanting to render this one of the richest views imaginable ; not a tree is now to be seen along the shores, although formerly they were covered with a continued forest.

Fish is so plentiful at Baltimore, that, after the neighbouring inland district has been quite glutted, and after immense quantities have been dried and salted, in which business every person that can be procured is kept constantly employed during the

rage of this old gentleman ;—that smuggling has been long suppressed ; and, when otherwise, Burgundy was not among the wines to be obtained in the country. All this serves to confirm the hospitality of our host. Are there no shipwrecks on this rocky and dangerous coast ?

The same gentleman observed farther, that intelligent and respectable travellers should be cautious of relating even truths when improbable. To my understanding, however, it appears that facts, attested by credible witnesses, are the foundation of all knowledge, moral and physical, and should not unnecessarily be withheld.

* Cape Clear lies still farther to the south ; but it is a separate island.

proper season, large heaps are commonly left, which are used in manuring the ground. On comparing the plenty which prevails on this coast, with the scarcity of animal food elsewhere, one cannot refrain from speculative theories on the great advantage which would arise from transporting people hither, from the inland pasture countries, to assist in curing the fish, and also from the establishment of manufactures, in such an abundant country. But whilst the subdivision of land, and the encouragement of new comers, depend on private, not public interests, advantages of this nature must be left to find their own level ; and thousands of human beings must still be doomed to suffer comparative want in one district, whilst food more than sufficient to feed ten times their number is left to putrefy on the ground in another.

The vessels used here for fishing, called *hookers*, appear to be peculiar to this coast : the principal place for building them is Kinsale : they are rigged with a single mast, placed very forward, which carries a large mainsail, with peak and boom ; they have also a small foresail ; but, though provided with a bowsprit, it is seldom used : they sail with uncommon velocity ; go very near the wind ; may be navigated by a few hands, and are remarkable for their buoyancy ; so that those of a large size, although built without decks, are considered as perfectly safe, and are frequently taken far out to sea. It is here asserted

that they are capable of outsailing all other small craft; but a similar opinion is maintained on other coasts, in favour of boats of a very different description. That the hooker, however, is a vessel of extraordinary excellence, there can be no doubt; and I have frequently heard it highly spoken of by naval officers.

At Baltimore we embarked for Innisharkin-island, the chief object of curiosity on which is a ruined abbey. From the numerous remains of monasteries, situated on islands along this coast, and not only on such as were distinguished for the fertility of their soil, but even on barren rocks, (as those for instance called the Skeligs, near Bolus-head, in Kerry,) it appears that the Irish monks had a strong partiality for the retirement of such places. The abbey of Innisharkin was not extensive; but its remains display more taste than is usually observable in similar edifices in Ireland. It is regarded as a spot of peculiar sanctity, by the people of the neighbouring district, and the cemetery is still used.

We next proceeded to Cape Clear-island, which is about three miles long and two broad, and contains fifteen hundred inhabitants. The people consider themselves a superior race to those of the main land, and have such an extraordinary predilection for their little community, that he who ventures to choose a wife elsewhere, is immediately *sent to Coventry*, and

obliged ultimately to quit the island. In the burial-ground of a ruined chapel, in the centre of the island, many bones of gigantic size were shewn to us, and the natives still boast of uncommon strength of body ; but, whatever their corporeal powers may be, their stature does not at present exceed that of the inhabitants of the neighbouring shores. The soil is far from being fertile, and feeble exertions are made to supply, by industry, the deficiencies of nature. Potatoes, oats, and barley, are the chief produce ; sea wrack and sand the common manure. When the weed can be procured in sufficient quantities, at the proper season, it is dug into the earth ; but, for the most part, it is only strewed over the surface after the seed is committed to the ground. The abundance of fish makes the people negligent of agriculture, and they are rendered yet more indolent by the immoderate use of spirituous liquors, which are smuggled in large quantities into the island. We were told that there was not a house on it, which was not plentifully supplied with this deleterious beverage. No sooner was it known that we had not come amongst them with any bad intention, than the people of the houses which we entered, immediately brought forth bottles of spirits ; and were but ill pleased that we went away without drinking a dram.

Coarse woollen cloth is manufactured here for domestic use, which, instead of being thickened by a

mill, is placed on hurdles in a stream or pool of water, and trampled under foot by females. The employment generally falls on the young and active, who prepare for the task by tucking up their petticoats very high ; and, far from betraying any symptoms of bashfulness, at their unusual nakedness, they rather seem pleased at having an opportunity of displaying their nimbleness and dexterity : it is a merry occupation, indeed, which wears more the appearance of pastime than labour.*

Cape Clear-island is pleasingly varied with hill and valley, particularly on the southern side, where it presents to the Atlantic a steep inaccessible cliff. The coast, in general, is bold and rock-bound ; but there are several commodious landing-places in the little bays and inlets with which it is indented. The rock consists of coarse argillaceous schistus, nearly resembling that of the main shore ; but the strata are more distinct, and form a larger angle with the plane of the horizon : In some places their position is nearly vertical. The only mineral production on the island, of apparent rarity in this district, is a fine grained siliceous sand-stone, applicable to the nicest purposes of architecture : the arches and window frames of the

* In the north of Ireland, it is customary for girls to wash thread in a similar manner, by dancing upon it in tubs of water ; and it is not less a scene of merriment.

abbey of Innisharkin, and many of its ornaments, are formed of this stone.

At the south-western point of the island, on a lofty mass of rock which overhangs the sea, and can only be approached by a very narrow path, the remains are to be seen of a large castle. As its position is remote from all the landing-places, one would imagine it was rather erected for the purpose of ensuring a secure retreat to a garrison, than defending the shores. The view, looking down from the battlements which guard the brink of the precipice upon the waves below, is truly awful. Though the air was remarkably still, and the sea to appearance calm, yet the sudden opposition given by the rocks to the swell which never forsakes the waters of the Atlantic, and to the current of the tide, occasioned breakers of immense height, whose roar resounded along the shores : what then must be the terrific grandeur of the scene, when the mighty billows are impelled against this cliff by all the fury of the storm !

The elevated grounds of the Cape command a distinct prospect of the southern coast of Ireland, for upwards of fifty miles, from Mizen-head, at the mouth of Dunmanus-bay, to the Old Head of Kinsale. The shore is every where extremely bold, though the great height of the mountains, to the west of the Cape, gives an appearance of comparative tameness to the coast in an opposite direction.

Dunmanus-bay, Bantry-bay, Kenmare-river, and the great estuaries of this coast, are all bounded by chains of mountains, which run nearly parallel to each other in a south-west direction, and terminate in lofty capes. Mizen-head, the first of these which meets the eye of the spectator at Cape Clear, obstructs, owing to its great elevation, the prospect of the more distant points ; but many of the mountains of Kerry are plainly observable above it.

It was our intention to cross from Cape Clear to Crook-haven, and enter on the opposite western shore, which terminates in the promontory, called Mizen-head. The boatmen, desirous of avoiding the labour of the oar, had persuaded us to wait in expectation of a breeze, till the latest moment that it was possible to remain on the island, without risking the danger of being out during the night, at which time it is difficult to find the entrance of the port. Their stay, however, was of no avail ; a perfect stillness pervaded the heavens ; and when we committed ourselves to the ocean, the sun had nearly terminated his course : but whatever uneasiness arose from the tardy progress of the rowers, was more than counterbalanced by the glorious spectacle of the sun sinking in the waves of the Atlantic ; and the extraordinary beauty of the coast, whose promontories and mountain tops, long after the luminary had disappeared from our eyes, displayed the greatest variety of lively

warm tints ; whilst their bases, suffused with sombre gray, were scarcely distinguishable from the sea out of which they arose.

Crooked or Crook-haven is a long inlet, which lies in a direction almost parallel to that of the coast, being bounded on one side by mountains, and on the other by a peninsula of low rocks which separates it from the ocean. The anchorage is every where good, and a fleet of the largest vessels could ride in it with perfect ease : from its sheltered situation, it is deemed one of the securest harbours on the coast, and is a common place of resort, in bad weather, for homeward-bound West Indian ships. As we proceeded up the haven, we were entertained by the sight of numerous seals playing about the boat ; one of which rose above the water very close to us, with a salmon of large size in his jaws. At the first effort he nearly bit it through the middle, and then, making two or three snaps, like a dog, devoured the whole almost instantaneously : we distinctly heard the craunching of the bones between his teeth : yet some naturalists assert, that seals always eat their prey beneath the water. The power of catching so swift a fish as the salmon demonstrates their great dexterity in the water, notwithstanding the apparent unwieldiness of their form : the boatmen assured us no fish could swim faster. These animals are found in great abundance along the south-western coast of Ireland ; but,

valuable as they are on account of their skins, and the great quantity of oil which they yield, they are pursued for profit less frequently than for pastime. To attack them in their rocky caves is deemed a service of danger, as they bite with great ferocity, and sometimes defend themselves obstinately. The people, we were informed, prepare for the encounter by tying small bags of charcoal round their legs and arms, under an idea that, if the seal feels it crackle beneath his teeth, he will relinquish his hold, mistaking the noise for the crash of the bones, and the destruction of his enemy : but, as I never heard of any person who had absolutely made the experiment, I suspect that this must be a vulgar prejudice : such an imaginary defence, however, inspires confidence and coolness in the attack, and the conquest then becomes more easy.

At the head of Crook-haven stands a small village, which contains a few fishermen's huts and a public-house. Here we were preparing to stop for the night, as there was no town within fifteen miles. Salt-fish, potatoes, and whisky, the common fare of the country, the house afforded in abundance ; but it contained only one miserable bed, to which a great-coat and the floor were far preferable. Many minutes, however, had not elapsed after our arrival, when the clergyman of the parish, who had observed our boat proceeding up the haven, and had learned that it con-

tained strangers who were not likely to find comfortable accommodation in the village, came to invite us to his house. We gladly accompanied him home, and felt no small pleasure at the sudden transition, from a miserable hut and the brawls of drunken fishermen, to a commodious habitation and an agreeable and polished society.

The traveller who finds the inconveniences of his journey lessened, or its pleasures heightened, by the attention of the inhabitants of the country through which he passes, must have a cold heart not to feel lively sentiments of gratitude for the kindness he receives. Far from depreciating qualities which do honour to human nature, by arguing with the casuist that hospitality is the virtue of countries thinly inhabited, where it is practised more frequently for the indulgence of the resident who finds himself cut off from society, than for the benefit of the passing stranger, the generous mind will attribute nobler motives to the man who, banishing every shadow of suspicion and distrust, freely opens his doors, and spreads his hospitable board for those whom he has never seen before, whom he expects not, perhaps, ever to meet again.

The country to the west of Crook-haven is wild and rocky, and there is nothing peculiarly interesting in the scenery, until Dunmanus-bay opens to view : its first appearance resembles that of a spacious lake

surrounded with mountains : nor is the nature of the place fully disclosed, until, on approaching the shore, the Atlantic ocean is discovered between the lofty capes which guard the entrance of the bay.

Along the water's-edge, there are considerable tracts of sloping ground under cultivation ; but the quantity remaining waste, consisting chiefly of salt marshes, is much greater, though seemingly capable of being drained, and converted to profit, at a moderate expense. The population is very thin, and, from the number of ruined castles and churches along the shores, probably much inferior to what it was formerly.

At the head of the bay lies an extensive vale, every part of which affords delightful views towards the sea ; and, on crossing the mountains which bound it on the west, the eye has scarcely lost sight of Dunmanus, when a sudden prospect of Bantry-bay bursts upon it, which is still more spacious, and bordered by mountains of greater elevation. The scenery of each of the great estuaries of this coast is distinguished by so many noble features, that it would be difficult to determine which is entitled to the pre-eminence. Bantry-bay, however, possesses one advantage over the others, in being adorned with a considerable extent of wood along the upper parts of its shores ; which, though not of ancient growth, de-

rives importance from being situated on the slope of the mountains.

The town of Bantry stands on the eastern shore, at the upper part of the bay ; its extent is inconsiderable, and the houses in general are of mean appearance. None but very small vessels can approach it ; and the only advantage it seems to enjoy from its vicinity to the water, is an abundant supply of fish,—one which it possesses in common with every other place on the coast.

The seat of Lord Bantry, at the distance of somewhat less than a mile from the town, is beautifully situated in a rich park which reaches down to the water's edge. The bay in front of it is about six English miles across ; and studded with islands, beyond which are seen the woods of Glengariff and a long chain of lofty mountains. Whiddy, the largest of the islands, contains near a thousand acres, and is occupied by his lordship's farms. The variety of the soil is very remarkable : it affords bog, rocks, sand, and stiff clay ; whilst other parts under cultivation, of a loamy nature, are distinguished for their fertility. There are two lakes on this island ; one of which yields fresh and the other salt water, although they are both nearly on the same level, and only separated by a very narrow interval.

The shores of the bay are very rocky, and the soil in general meagre. The prevailing rock is argillace-

ous schistus ; but a great variety of stones was observable along the beach, amongst which were many large boulders of granite. The summits of the mountains are formed of a siliceous rock, precisely similar to that in the vicinity of Killarney : limestone is found at the head of the bay, and also marle ; but the latter is not in much esteem, probably from the over great proportion of argillaceous earth. The best manure is a certain species of sand, formed of white coralline finely comminuted, which is sought for with still greater avidity, and continues much longer efficacious in the ground, than that at Clonikilty : it is procured by means of dredges, from a bank which has hitherto afforded an inexhaustible supply.

Great pains have been taken, since the visit of the French fleet in the year 1796, to fortify Bantry-bay, and numerous batteries have been erected both on the shores and on the islands : but the utility of these works is very doubtful, as ships may sail up without passing near them ; and, even if it were possible to secure the entrance to Bantry, other estuaries remain open, still more inviting to an enemy. It is somewhat remarkable, that, though the French made choice of Bantry for their rendezvous, it was one of the very worst places, for a descent, on the whole coast of Ireland, as the shores, in almost every part, are rock-bound ; and, in stormy weather, covered with a surf which forbids the approach of boats, ex-

cepting in a few small coves and creeks, where a large force could not be landed without much delay. The southern coast can never be effectually protected by batteries : on its ships and armies the nation must rely for defence against invasion.

After having spent some days at Lord Bantry's, under whose polite guidance we received the highest gratification from the beauty and variety of the scenery in different excursions along the shores, we proceeded in his lordship's barge for about ten miles down the bay, and landed at the opposite side, at a place called Reen, where we were hospitably received by a clergyman. The wildness of the place, and the rude state of the inhabitants, may be exemplified by the circumstance of the plough having remained absolutely unknown there until it was introduced by this reverend gentleman. Immense crowds immediately flocked down from the neighbouring mountains to examine the novel instrument ; and its operations were beheld with wonder. To those of his parishioners who were inclined to employ it in the cultivation of their ground, the proprietor readily offered to lend it, and numerous applications were consequently made. Shortly, however, the plough ceased to be in request ; even the sight of it appeared to be cautiously shunned. That an instrument productive of such an obvious and immediate saving of labour should be thus discarded, seemed somewhat extraor-

clinary : but to unravel the mystery was not difficult. The people had been reminded that their forefathers had dug the ground ; that the plough was an innovation. An unanimous resolution was instantly made to follow in the steps of their ancestors : every argument to the contrary proved ineffectual ; and when we visited Reen, the ground still continued to be cultivated with the spade. *

We had been led to expect the sight of a noble

* I gave this account from the information of the worthy resident rector of the parish, by whom we were most hospitably and kindly received on our journey. The author of the Cork Survey, however, (page 289,) takes upon him, in very unequivocal language, to contradict it altogether; and on the strength of the very same authority which I relied upon for my information. To reconcile this contrariety of evidence, Mr Townsend, in an explanatory letter, supposes that our worthy host might have *amplified a little*, by way of amusing strangers.

Mr Townsend says, " The resident rector of the parish assures me, that the use of this implement is increasing, and that there are now eight ploughs, where, twelve or fifteen years ago, there were but three." The Cork Survey was published in 1810; and twelve or fifteen years before that period, that is, about the year 1795 or 1798, there were only *three* ploughs. We visited Reen in the year 1800, and the rector had been established there, I believe, for some years preceding. Now the rector certainly had more than *one* plough; and if the number in his possession, whether two or three, be subtracted from the least number, which Mr Townsend admits, viz. *three*, the remainder will be found to approximate very nearly, if not accurately, with the statement I have given.

Heaven forbid that the reign of ignorance and barbarity should be everlasting! It is most gratifying to hear of the change which a few years have occasioned, even in this obscure district.

water-fall, in the vicinity of Reen, called Adragole, which Dr Smith has described as the most lofty in Ireland : but, on approaching the spot, we found it quite dry ; and it was only from the drooping weeds, and discoloration of the rocks, that the course of the water could be traced. In winter, it must be a very grand object, as the height of the fall is between three and four hundred feet, and an immense body of water tumbles down the cliff. We were informed, that, during that season, and after heavy rains, four other falls are distinguishable at the same time, each of which is nearly as high as that of Adragole : the latter derives its chief supply from a large lake on Hungry-hill.

From Reen we proceeded by land to Beare-haven, crossing in our route the summit of Hungry-hill, or mountain, as it should rather be called, the most elevated land in this part of the country. It abounds with lakes, one of which, very near its summit, affords large quantities of trout ; whilst others, situated lower down the hill, yield none : this difference is probably rather to be ascribed to accident, than to any material difference in the qualities of the water.

The prospect from the summit of Hungry-hill is extremely extensive. Every creek and inlet on Bantry-bay appears as conspicuous as on a map ; and beyond the mountains, which bound it on the east, are seen Cape Clear, and a long extent of the south-

ern coast : in the opposite direction Kenmare-river opens to view, and the vast mountains of Kerry.

The country between Hungry-hill and the town of Beare-haven was much better cultivated than that towards the head of the bay, and the population appeared more numerous. Agriculture has been much promoted, throughout this country, by the Cork merchants ; who have built store-houses in suitable positions along the coast, where clerks are stationed to purchase corn, whenever the farmers of the adjacent districts find it convenient to bring it for sale ; and in general they prefer disposing of their grain in this manner, to the labour and uncertainty of carrying it to a distant market. The low grounds are devoted to tillage ; and on the hills are fed numerous herds of cows, from whose produce butter of the best quality is made, which is all sent to Cork. It is in this part of the country that the small breed of cattle is preserved, of which mention has already been made. The bulls are extremely fierce : in two or three instances we found whole villages in arms, to drive them back to the hills, which they had left in order to attack their rivals at the opposite side of the valley : they challenge each other with dreadful bellowings ; and when they meet, the conflict is obstinate and sometimes fatal.

Beare-haven was formerly defended by a strong castle, and was a place of no small importance in the

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the Irish chieftains maintained a frequent intercourse with Spain. The town stands in a convenient and pleasing position, on the banks of a small inlet of the sea; but the houses are poor, and few in number. The only objects of peculiarity here seemed to be the tombs in the church-yard, which were of a pyramidal form. The church was in ruins, and the few families of the established religion met at the house of the clergyman: the case was the same at Reen.

At Beare-haven we again embarked on the sea, with an intention of proceeding to Dursey-island, at the extremity of the long peninsula which separates Bantry-bay from Kenmare-river. The aspect of the coast below this place was bleak and desolate; it bore no trace of cultivation; and the only human beings we saw for many miles, were a few aged individuals who sat fishing on the rocks. Immense flocks of sea fowl hovered over the waves in quest of prey; and, as the boat passed under the shore, thousands more of various kinds, that lay concealed in the hollows of the cliffs, alarmed at our approach, took wing, and flitted around us with loud screams of the most discordant nature imaginable. These savage sounds, combined with the hoarse roar of the billows and the gloomy aspect of the tall impending piles of black rocks, gave something of horror to the scene, which was not relieved by the boundless prospect of

the vast Atlantic, or by the consideration that we had committed ourselves to its waves in a frail and leaky boat. More than six hours had elapsed from the time of our departure from Beare-haven ; when, perceiving that our rowers were exhausted with fatigue, that the flood tide opposed their progress, and that Crow-head, which terminates the peninsula, still lay at a great distance, we intimated our desire to be put on shore at a place where the cliff appeared accessible : but the men requested us to confide a little longer in their exertions, assuring us that, if the tide had risen to a certain height, the voyage would soon be over. On asseverations which had so often proved fallacious much reliance was not to be placed : in this instance, however, we were agreeably surprised by perceiving the boat almost immediately directed towards a break or chasm in the cliff, which afforded, as we were informed, a short passage into Dursey-sound. It was so narrow as barely to admit the boat ; and on each side was guarded by walls of rock of vast height, which, approaching at the top, obscured the light of heaven, and cast an awful gloom over the water below. On entering it, the ocean was soon lost to our view ; but the roaring of the waves continued to resound through the vaults of the passage, and, increasing as we advanced, intimated that seas still more agitated than those which we had left lay beyond it : but it was merely the effect of the echoes,

for, in a few minutes, we found ourselves in a calm sheltered basin, whose shores, well cultivated, and studded with houses, appeared highly grateful to an eye wearied by the long-continued view of barren rocks and immeasurable expanse of ocean. This basin is situated between Crow-head and Dursey-island.

Dursey-island is about three miles long, and two wide. It contains several villages, and in some parts is tolerably well cultivated. The inhabitants, like most others on this coast, are well provided with food and raiment, and seem to be a very contented happy race of people. One would wish, however, that the pursuits of honest industry were more attended to than smuggling and shipwrecks, the principal sources of their wealth at present. The numberless insulated rocks on this coast are productive of the utmost danger to vessels which are so unfortunate as to be drifted towards the land during the night: at the distance of miles from the main shore we perceived several, which did not appear larger than the hull of a small vessel.

The most curious of the rocks within sight of Dursey are those called the Skeligs, which were once the seat of several monasteries and chapels, whose remains are still visible. They are quite barren, but abound with springs of good water. It is said that they consist entirely of marble; a remarkable circumstance, if true, as the other islands are compo-

sed of argillaceous and siliceous rocks, and no calcareous matter is found on the opposite coast much nearer than the lake of Killarney. The Gannet, or Solan goose, breeds on these rocks, and is never seen, if current report is to be believed, on any other part of the coast of Ireland.

Dursey island affords specular iron ore, of which we found many beautiful specimens adhering to quartz, in flat hexaëdral crystals : searches were formerly made for the ore, in different parts of the island, by sinking deep pits, which still remain ; but of the quantity that was procured we could learn nothing.

At this place we were met by O'Sullivan M^cFinan Duff, who conducted us in a boat to his house, which is agreeably situated at the head of an inlet, about fifteen miles from the mouth of Kenmare-river. This gentleman is regarded as the chief of the O'Sullivans in this district, and, as a mark of respect, is simply addressed by his surname. The O'Sullivan-*more*,* or head of the eldest branch of the family, according to their genealogy lately printed in London, is an English baronet : the *O'* was dropped some time before the family settled in England.

Of the *Ardea* branch of this family some particulars

* *More* signifies *great*, and was a title anciently attached to the head of the sept.

were communicated to me by Mr Beltz, of the Herald's college, of a nature so extraordinary, that I shall make no apology for inserting them in this place.

In the twelfth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Owen O'Sullivan, in order to establish a substantial title to the countries he then held, surrendered them to the crown, and received a formal grant thereof by patent. This measure gave rise to a long suit at law between Sir Owen and his nephew Donel M'Donel O'Sullivan; the latter of whom endeavoured to prove that his uncle had usurped the possession at the death of his (Donel's) father. Sir Owen, on the contrary, pleaded that the possession of the estates had fallen to him by the laws of Tanistry,* and had been afterwards irrevocably established by the letters patent.

The suit terminated in a commission being issued

* " Tanistry, among the Irish, was an ancient law of succession, whether to regal power, or to any princely dignity to which landed property was annexed, whereby, according to its primitive nature and institution, the eldest male among the near kinsmen of the last ruling prince, (legally succeeding) and of the same name and stock, was constitutionally to succeed him, by the right of seniority, unless some natural or accidental infirmity had rendered him incapable of governing. Tanaiste, or Taniste, was the distinguishing appellation, or title, of the senior and presumptive successor in every princely family."—VALLANCEY. A law more calculated to produce family dissensions, and public disturbance, could not well have been devised; as it was possible that cousins might lay claim to the succession, between whom no actual difference of age existed, or at least was allowed to exist.

under the great seal, dated at Dublin the 18th July, in the thirty-fifth of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, directing Sir Thomas Norreys, vice-president of Munster, and others, to partition and plot out, by certain limits and boundaries, the territories, hereditaments, castles, &c., of Beare, Bantry, Ardea, and others, belonging to the O'Sullivans; which partition was effected by an instrument dated at Mallow 15th January, 1593. The castle and dependencies of Beare were allotted to Donel; and Bantry, &c., to Sir Owen; saving only to Sir Philip O'Sullivan, younger brother to Sir Owen, the castle of Ardea and its dependencies. Attempts, however, were made, a few years afterwards, to wrest the castle of Ardea from the lawful possessor, pursuant to the old custom of tanistry; whereupon an appeal was made to the lord-deputy of Ireland; and, upon the petition of the injured party, a copy was granted of the above-mentioned instrument of partition. Sir Philip's heir was secured in his rights; and the family continued to maintain possession of the castle, until it was forfeited during the civil wars.

In the year 1802, Mr Beltz, having had occasion to visit the south of Ireland, stopped at the house of O'Sullivan M'Finan Duff; where, inquiring, through curiosity, if any of the Ardea branch of that family remained in existence, he was informed that a cottager, in very humble circumstances, lived in the

neighbouring mountains, who was reputed to be the lineal descendant of Sir Philip. Desirous of an interview with him, a message was sent to that effect : the ruins of Ardea castle, on the banks of Kenmare river, were fixed upon as the place of rendezvous ; and, pursuant to appointment, the man, accompanied by his whole family, appeared there on the allotted day. Aware, in some measure, of the object of the interview, he had brought in his hand a bundle of parchments and papers, which he opened and spread on the grass. They were all in a mouldering state, and nearly obliterated by the damp and smoke of his cabin. Of their purport he knew nothing : no person, he said, to whom he had ever showed them, not even the priest of the parish himself, had been able to read them ; but, as they had been handed down from father to son, for many generations, he had preserved them with a scrupulous care to the best of his ability.

Mr Beltz, prior to his examination of these writings, wished to assure himself of the identity of the person who brought them : he therefore put numerous questions to him, each of which was answered with such precision, that no doubt could remain of the man being the actual lineal descendant of Sir Philip O'Sullivan. It appeared that he was the seventh in descent from Sir Philip,* which, allowing thirty

* It is probable that the Christian names of the family contribu-

years for each generation, made up a period of two hundred and ten years ; nearly agreeing with the date of the first settlement of the family at Ardea. Mr Beltz then took up one of the parchments, and, to his surprise, found that it was the actual copy of the deed of partition which had been granted to Sir Philip's heirs, upon petition to the lord-deputy of Ireland, in the year 1613. He next discovered the original draft of the petition, with several other writings equally ancient, which it would have been impossible to have decyphered, owing to their mouldy state, if he had not happened previously, whilst pass-

ted in some measure to assist the memory in this instance. The account given by the man of his genealogy was as follows :—

Philip	{ Who first came to Ardea ; probably soon after the date of the deed of partition, in 1593.
~~~~~	
Daniel M'Philip.	
~~~~~	
Owen M'Daniel.	
~~~~~	
Daniel M'Owen.	
~~~~~	
Owen M'Daniel.	
~~~~~	
Dermond M'Owen.	
~~~~~	
Kerry M'Dermond, the informant.	

ing through Dublin, to have taken copies of the same in the record office.

That writings of such a nature should thus be preserved for almost two centuries, and that an illiterate man, whose family for generations had not enjoyed a condition above that of peasants, should be able to give such a detailed account of his genealogy, is a circumstance to which a parallel would not readily be found, except amongst the Irish. As to Mr Beltz, who was able to explain these writings, and to tell so much more of the history of the family than the poor man himself knew, he was regarded as a prophet, and found no small difficulty in disengaging himself from the importunities of the people.

Kenmare river is very improperly so called : it is an inlet of the sea, which deserves the name of a bay or haven ; and it is difficult to determine how it came to be otherwise called, as no river falls into it of sufficient importance to have given it a name. It is about thirty English miles in length, and varies in breadth from two to seven miles. The shores are diversified by numerous creeks and coves ; and it abounds with islands, many of which are extraordinarily beautiful. In some places the mountains rise abruptly from the water ; in others, a considerable extent of sloping ground intervenes between them. The views on every side are highly picturesque ; but the most striking parts of the scenery are where the



lofty peaks of the Kerry mountains are seen through valleys, rising in the distance, and gradually receding behind each other till they are lost in the air. Kenmare river is more sheltered than any of the other estuaries of the south-west coast; so that the water, notwithstanding its great expanse and the influence of the tide, remains commonly very tranquil, and sometimes, by its smooth and glassy surface, adds much to the beauty of the scenery. Some parts of the shores are well cultivated; but, on the whole, they are very thinly inhabited.

We sailed up the river in O'Sullivan's boat, intending to land at Nedheen or Kenmare town; but the wind having failed, and the day drawing towards a close, we judged it advisable to run the boat on shore, and to proceed thither on foot. The country where we landed was covered with rocks, swamps, and heath, over which we advanced for some miles, without being well aware of our proper course. At last we came to a road; and, on following it, reached a village romantically situated near a river, whose banks, covered with wood, were so steep and lofty, that the bridge across it, notwithstanding the excavation and lowering of the road on each side, was upwards of sixty feet above the level of the water. The river above it, confined in a narrow channel, tumbled over rocks in numberless cascades, whose water sparkled through the embowering trees which shot from the cliffs at

each side ; whilst below the bridge it expanded to a considerable breadth, forming a deep basin, in which several vessels lay at anchor under the shores. The great elevation of the bank, and the consequent shade that is diffused over the surface of the water, render its appearance extremely dark ; and the river is known by the appropriate name of the Blackwater.

The sun had sunk below the horizon when we arrived at this place ; but the rich gleam of light still continued to illumine the western sky, which afforded us a distinct view of the surrounding landscape. A perfect calm pervaded the heavens ; the blue curling smoke of the village chimneys rose slowly through the dark woods ; and the stillness of the scene was only interrupted by the sound of water gushing over the rocks, and the wild plaintive notes of the native Irish airs which resounded through the vale. We had met with nothing more interesting on our journey ; and, forgetful that we had to seek a lodging for the night, remained on the heights opposite to the village contemplating the beauty of the scene, till the shades of evening, and the thick white mists which rose from the river, involved every object in obscurity. No accommodation whatever was to be procured in the village ; we were therefore under the necessity of walking on to Nedheen, about eight miles distant, where we arrived at midnight, and with difficulty got admittance into a miserable public-house.

Nedheen is the principal place of trade on Kenmare river : it is a very small town ; and, though we observed some new houses, has, on the whole, an appearance of decay. Perhaps this is to be attributed to the very bad state of the roads which lead to it ; and if so, it will probably not recover very soon, as it seems the object of the inhabitants of Kerry rather to direct their new roads towards the Blackwater, which is a more convenient place for shipping, and better situated for supplying the inland district with foreign commodities.

There is an abundance of excellent limestone at Nedheen, by means of which the hills around might be all readily improved ; and, if the occupiers received good encouragement, agriculture would flourish, and the country probably wear a very different aspect from what it does at present.

A wild romantic road leads from this place to Kilarney, which, at the end of about six miles, discovers a beautiful prospect of the upper lake, through a wooded glen. Afterwards it traverses several steep and rugged mountains, and, winding through the long vale between Turk and Mangerton, approaches the lower lake over the rich hills of Mucruss.

THE END.

EDINBURGH :

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